Trope: Unplanned Pregnancy AU (Hannigram AU)

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Trope: Unplanned Pregnancy AU (Hannigram AU)

by TigerPrawn

Summary

Things take an unexpected turn when scientists Hannibal Lecter and Jack Crawford lose funding for their fertility treatment research.

Notes

For Hannibal Reel Fest
Based on the movie Junior (1994)
NB: This is... kinda dub-con, in that Will doesn't consent to Hannibal's self-experimentation and it's relevance to himself. This is pretty much as is in the movie, and I was tempted to take it dark (because, no lie - rewatch Junior - it's fucked up), but hey ho, happy endings all around.

See the end of the work for more notes

Insemination

“You look like shit.”

Jack Crawford’s words were directed with neither amusement nor concern. Hannibal looked up from where he sat at his desk in the lab, quirking his brow at his colleague and research partner. Not friend. They had a fair working relationship - both specialists in their field of fertility - but they were not friendly. They complimented each other well in the project they had teamed up on at the university’s research centre. Hannibal was research driven and dedicated to lab work and results, Jack was great dealing with university politics, pharma companies and still operated his own OB/GYN practice - which might prove useful at trial stages.

If they got to human trials.

Jack ignored the pointed look and asked, “how did it go?”

Hannibal let out a long sigh. He had spent the morning neck deep in processing results from the simian trials and had spent the last hour giving a tour of the lab to the F.D.A. reps.

“We shall see.” Hannibal fobbed Jack off. The tour had been stilted and the questions few, but he was sure he had gotten across the importance of their work and the positive results from trials so far. They had successfully helped three omega chimps to full term with their drug - Expectane. Three who’d had multiple miscarriages each and were found to have a condition whereby their immune systems broke down embryos, believing them to be foreign bodies. The difference this could make to seemingly infertile omegas all across the world was potentially astronomical.

“Are you fully prepared?” Hannibal asked, nodding his head toward the portfolio Jack tapped in his hands.

“As ready as I’ll ever be.” Jack grinned, all confidence.

Hannibal had to admit that Jack’s optimism was something that had kept them going many a time in the beginning when they were still refining the formula and not getting the results they’d have liked.

Hannibal stood and took off his lab coat, hanging it on his labelled peg before they proceeded out the door and to the F.D.A. approval meeting.

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“This isn’t good.” Jack muttered under his breath as he opened the door to the lab. Kade Prurnell, head of the research department, had a strange smile on her face and Hannibal understood immediately Jack’s mumbled words.

It was an almost triumphant smile, tempered by her inability to be anything but sternly professional.

“News from the Board?” Jack asked, a cheerful note as he grabbed his lab coat from the rack.

“I’m sorry, Doctor Lecter, Doctor Crawford, the Board has cut funding to your research.” She said, matter of factly.

Although Hannibal was sure Jack expected that news he made a show of slamming his jacket back on the peg with a growl. If Prurnell hadn’t been a fellow alpha, she may well have baulked, but instead she raised a disapproving brow.

“You will need to vacate the lab by the end of the day.” She continued, tone flat.

“Can I ask what happened?” Hannibal asked politely, though his displeasure bubbled beneath the surface.

Prurnell let out a huff, as though this was all a mere annoyance and not their entire research project, their careers.

“The F.D.A. said no to moving to human trials, the board cannot justify funding dead end research. Please pack up quietly, we don’t want a scene.” She seemed to be enjoying this, her eyes trained on Jack, who she had never had a fondness for.

“Now wait just a damn minute-” Jack bellowed.

She held up a hand to him, “this has always been on the cards, you know that. The university was never going to keep funding you if you didn’t get F.D.A. approval on the first rounds. Without human trials there is no way to sell this to pharmas. If it can’t make money then it isn’t a viable investment. The board don’t want to look like fools.” She spoke firmly, knocking the wind out of Jack’s sails a little, before continuing in a lower tone. “I have no agenda here. What is important to me is the reputation of this university.”

Hannibal practically felt Jack bristle, and stepped between the two other alphas, his hands now up to placate. “Let’s discuss this professionally. Doctor Prurnell, I’m sure if you let us

present to the Board? They will understand that this decision by the F.D.A. is merely a setback. Once we have more results from the simians we can go before them again and-"

"Now you're sounding desperate Doctor Lecter." Prurnell cut him off.

Hannibal raised a brow, not feeling that was the case at all, but it was quite like Prurnell to claim it to be so. He was sure this was evident in his expression when she very nearly snarled at him.

"Not at all. I would just hate for the Board to be short sighted here."

"I assure you, they have considered everything. Please be out by the end of the day. We're excited to be welcoming Doctor Graham. The board has agreed to fund his research into his new cryogenic technique for freezing eggs, he will need this space." She started to stalk off, her heels clacking and leaving a ringing in their ears.

The door swung shut behind her and Jack let out another low growl.

"I guess that's it." Hannibal let out a long breath.

He was surprised when Jack let out a bark of laughter, a slightly hysterical glint in his eyes.

"She's right Jack, we knew this could happen."

"Oh, I know," he shook his head and waved a dismissive hand. "Just… what a day. Bella came by my office earlier."

Hannibal frowned. He knew from the few conversations they'd had that might be called personal, Jack and Bella had separated a short while ago. He had believed it to have been amicable and that they were getting along. Hannibal wasn't about to pry, so it was a relief when Jack continued without prompting -

"She wants me to be her OB/GYN… she's pregnant." He blew out a breath into the quiet room.

Hannibal was entirely unsure what to say. "I thought you…"

"Yeah. I mean… we've been hooking up now and then, because… damn I guess we're idiots. Jokes on me though. I'm not even the father. You know how many years we tried?" He threw up his hands. "Doesn't matter. Just… what a fucking day."

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Will Graham had been surprised but excited to get the call from the prestigious Science Research Institute at the University of Baltimore. It was one of the many places he had applied for funding and labspace for his research over the last couple of years, and the sudden contact part way through a university year was surprising but welcome.

They were offering larger and better equipped labspace, and more importantly, more funding. It was too good to turn down, even if it meant a bit of a last minute move.

The real hassle was moving the cryo-unit. He had spent years developing this unit on paper before he had even started to have it built. He'd spent his childhood tinkering with engines at his dad's boatyard, and whilst he decided on medicine over engineering in the end, he spent his college years earning money in the summer as a mechanic. A combination of these aspects of his life had allowed him to be heavily involved in the building as well as the design.

It was designed to keep omegan ovum at the optimum temperature for long term storage. In this day and age of career omegas, such a thing was becoming all the more important given that fertile heats could end as early as thirty five years old, forty at the most, and extending heats through extraordinary measures could be dangerous. It was possible for an omega to carry a child maybe a year or two after fertile heats ended, so this option was great for omega's who might not have realised until it happened that their fertile heats were over. But also it was an option for older omegas wanting to find a surrogate without the time pressure of many standard storage options.

Although it wasn't something he talked about, it was hard for him to deny his focus on this area was personal. His mother had been older and had her fertile heats prolonged with drugs that had since been withdrawn by the F.D.A.. He remembered it well, even though he'd only been six years old when his parents decided they wanted to try for another baby. Both his mother and the baby had died due to massive complications during delivery. His dad had been distraught and Will had become an insular child, focusing only on his studies.

And now he was pushing thirty-eight, and had no interest in children of his own as yet. But part of him still wanted that option - a safety net his mother hadn't had. He had used his unit to freeze one of his own eggs. At the least, it seemed right that if he was going to put someone else's into untried new technology, he should be willing to do the same.

"Doctor Graham!" The voice made Will look around, catching sight immediately of someone he knew from profile photos only on the University website. "Kade Prurnell," she held out her hand to shake. Her smile wasn't quite warm, but was welcoming nonetheless.

"Hi." Will replied, shaking her hand before turning back to watch the movers open the back of the delivery truck.

Will knew he wasn't great with people, but realised that perhaps he should have made some sort of small talk, or at least thanked Prurnell for the opportunity when she cleared her throat. That didn't come easily to him, especially considering he was mostly surrounded by alphas and half the time he just couldn't be bothered to deal with their bullshit. He was trying to formulate a further response to Prurnell when he heard a clang.

"Please, be careful with that!" Will cringed as the movers unhooked the unit and started to roll it off of the back of the delivery truck.

They nodded and seemed to be taking extra care, but Will watched them like a hawk anyway, all the way into the building and through to his new lab.

Prurnell lead the way and had picked up conversation where he had failed to leave off - a little welcoming speech, followed by practical information about the lab and building. Will

knew it would be rude to interject, but was sorely tempted to just to ask where the coffee machine was. Priorities.

Will made the effort to listen to what Prurnell was saying whilst still trying to keep an eye on the movers, as they approached the lab door. Prurnell opened it ushering Will and the movers before her, neither of them anticipating the slight ramp into lab. It was barely there, just inside the door, and probably was not a problem most of the time. But Will, still concentrating on the movers, was thrown by the slight variance in elevation.

One of the movers stumbled too, just as the one closest to Will reached out to stop the omega falling. Very chivalrous, but idiotic. Will practically growled at the man, who must have immediately realised his mistake and went to reach for the unit again. But it was too late, the other mover had already lost his grip in his stumble and it began to roll out of control into the lab.

“Fuck!” Will spat, stumbling even more as he tried to snatch for the unit and missed. He managed to right himself and chase after it, just getting in front of it in time to slow it, but not stop it entirely, before hitting into one of the staff.

“Goddamn it!” Will exclaimed his frustration as the man he hit into took the brunt of both himself and the unit. The unit stopped with a small jerk which made everything inside rattle. But Will was unable to do anything immediately about that as the momentum took him and the man to the floor.

“Ooof.” The air was knocked out of Will as he landed on top of the alpha, who was wearing an expression somewhere between annoyed and confused. “Thanks.” Will forced out, begrudgingly.

“You’re welcome.” The reply was a soft croon as the alpha’s features softened - it made Will clench his jaw. He really didn’t like suave alphas, too damn full of themselves. All thinking they are some sort of hero, and this one was likely no exception - especially considering the situation.

Will stopped himself from blurting that he wasn’t some kind of omega in distress and was usually quite capable of not throwing himself onto unsuspecting alphas, but even in his head he knew the words were wrong. The last thing he needed was to let this guy think he was hungry for an alpha - that old stereotype. All career until you meet the right one.

“Ugh.” Will made the sound of distaste at his own thoughts before he even realised it, earning a quirked brow from the alpha he still lay bodily on top of.

“Well, as pleasant as this has been, I can’t spend the day down here.” There was a gentle smile that took the edge of bite from word. Even so Will screwed up his face into a look of disgust and clambered off of the alpha.

Will went immediately to the unit, first checking the readouts and then opening it to make sure nothing inside was damaged and letting out a sigh of relief to find all was well. Another suited man was stood next to it, looking over it with interest before being pulled out of his study by Prurnell’s voice.

“Gentleman,” her tone was stern and it took Will a moment to realise she wasn’t addressing him but the two alphas in suits. Both in suits rather than lab coats. “I thought you would be gone by now.”

“We’re going.” The alpha next to him responded gruffly before they both went out through the door Will had just come through.

Will frowned and shook his head, completely at a loss as to what had just happened.

“Please, Doctor Graham, if you are in need of anything please let me know. But in the meantime, the team will help you get settled. Katz?” Prurnell looked over at one of the three lab techs who seemed to all be stood around watching the entire event with completely unconcealed amusement. As did the chimp that sat on the workbench next to them, a wide grin pulled across his face when Will glanced at him.

“I don’t need chimps.” Will found himself saying, noting immediately the frowns on the faces before him.

“I will have animal control-” Prunell started, but when Will realised the deeper frowns and almost distressed looks he interrupted.

“No, no. It’s fine. I, uh… I’m sure there will be some scope for them. Better to have them stay than have to find more later.” Will turned and smiled at Prurnell who actually looked pretty disinterested. Even so she gave a curt nod before turning and walking out of the room.

“Thanks.” The woman said, “Bev Katz.” She stepped forward and held out her hand to shake, which Will took as she continued. “This is Brian Zeller and Jimmy Price. We’re the lab techs. We were assisting on the Expectane research, but I guess we’re yours now.” She grinned. “Oh, and little Chilton of course.” She reached out her arms and the young chimp immediately threw himself into them, holding out his hand to shake too.

Will huffed out a breath but shook the chimp’s hand anyway.

“He was born here,” Katz started to explain as she put the chimp to the floor and he loped across the room to a sizeable and nicely decked out enclosure. “Part of Doctor Lecter’s work. He doesn’t know any different, so it would be kind of mean to send him away.”

Will nodded, and then waved his hand dismissively. “No problem, he can stay I guess. So… is it just the four of us then? Who were those other guys?” Will asked as he began to look around the lab, trying to work out the best place for the unit and even for the next one he was planning - a few tweaked techniques with further improvements.

“Doctor Crawford, and the one you knocked off his feet was Doctor Lecter.” Katz said, moving over to a station. Jimmy and Brian had already returned to where they had been when he came in - and it appeared all three were packing a few things up.

Right in that moment Will wasn’t too concerned, because the penny suddenly dropped.

“Who was that?” He asked again, like he was completely stupid.

Katz cocked a brow at him. “You mean Doctor Lecter?”

“That… that was Doctor Hannibal Lecter?” Will blinked and his mouth went dry.

“Yeah, this was their lab - Doctor Lecter and Doctor Crawford were running the Expectane research project. But… I guess, they’re out, you’re in.”

Will scrubbed his face with both hands and stifled a groan. The man he had followed the career of for years, had read every paper by, and had hoped to one day run into at a conference and not make a fool of himself. *That* was the man who he had not only practically physically assaulted, but he had also displaced his research project?

“Dammit!” Will spat, causing all three of the lab staff to raise a brow at him.

The chimp, Chilton, made a hooting sound.

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“Hannibal, wait. Where are you going?”

He could feel Crawford jogging up behind him. After they’d left the lab he’d gone back to his on campus accommodation - which he was now fairly glad of. Initially he had planned to rent a place of his own, but he had needed to move quicker than allowed for him to find a place and there was some residential housing for staff, so he’d rented one. The intention had been to still find somewhere else, but then the research had taken over and he had no time. And it was great being so close to the lab.

The only downside was that Jack knew exactly where to find him, and now he was following him from the little apartment block out to the waiting taxi.

“I’m going back to Europe, Jack. Without the funding I can’t make this work here. In Europe I maybe able to get human trials-”

“Hannibal,” Jack cut in sternly. “We’re partners in this. I’m not going to Europe. Hell, I’m about to almost not really be a father, I can’t exactly take off and go work in Lithuania or some other damn place.”

Hannibal had to admit he was slightly taken aback, and somewhat impressed, that Jack had bothered to remember a personal snippet of information about him, like his country of origin.

“I don’t fit here Jack, I’ll have better luck elsewhere. The F.D.A. was just the last nail in the coffin.” Hannibal lifted his case into the taxi’s trunk before the driver closed it. “Price and Zeller will find someone else to mimic and mock.”

“That's not true. They don't do that.” Jack winced as he said it, not even able to sell the lie.

“I’m not well liked.” Hannibal huffed a chuckle and shook his head. He cared little what others thought of him, but there was certainly no person worth staying for now that his project was dead.

“I like you!” Jack protested.

“No you don’t” Hannibal smiled and got into the back of the taxi.

“Hey, just…” Jack clambered in too and told the driver he could go. Hannibal raised a brow at him as the car started towards the airport with them both inside.

“l talked to my guy at Lyndon Pharmaceutical, that Canadian firm. They'll give us additional funding… provided we find a volunteer for an Expectane protocol.” Jack was trying to contain his excitement as he spoke. “That’s what I was on my way to tell you.”

Hannibal frowned and shook his head. “We can't do the protocol without F.D.A. approval. We can’t do human trials, Jack.” Hannibal replied sternly.

“We can if we don't tell the F.D.A.” Jack grinned and then followed quickly, “are we going to let a bunch of Washington bureaucrats stand in the way of progress?” Jack’s excitement might have been enthusiastic if it weren’t so problematic.

“What omega will take an unapproved drug while they are pregnant?” Hannibal shook his head, it was completely ridiculous.

“Who says we need an omega?” Jack grinned that grin that Hannibal hated. The one that usually preceded an idea that Jack thought was infallible and fantastic.

“I don’t even want to ask.” Hannibal started, but Jack continued anyway, looking out the window and wondering how far they were from the airport.

“The experiment wouldn't have to identify the subject's dynamic. Just the human tissue reactives. Remember Francis? The monkey? He went five months to term.”

Hannibal did remember, and resisted the urge to correct his fellow scientist in the fact he well knew - that Francis was a chimp - an ape - not a monkey. An alpha one at that. Testing the Expectane on him had been Jack’s idea, and whilst the results had been scientifically interesting and added to the research, it had not been wholly necessary.

“You mean to do the test on an alpha?” Hannibal asked. Jack’s face was lit up with an eager grin.

“Why not? Are you allergic to anything?”

Hannibal’s eyebrows shot up. “Me? Completely out of the question, Jack.”

The taxi pulled up at the airport drop off zone and the driver looked somewhat relieved. Hannibal went to get out but Jack grabbed his wrist lightly.

“Hannibal, you wouldn't be *pregnant* pregnant. Sort of a guest host situation. We fertilize the egg. We implant it in the peritoneal cavity. Dose it with Expectane. Tiny thing, grain of rice. You carry it the first trimester. We get our data. Boom, it's over.”

He spoke conspiratorially, and the taxi driver was already looking in the rearview mirror at them with a worried frown.

Hannibal shook his head and went to get out of the car again. This time Jack released him but said -

“l guess l was wrong about you, Lecter. l took you for a scientist.”

“l am a scientist.” Hannibal stated, practically rolling his eyes at Jack’s obvious attempt at reverse psychology.

“Yeah? Where's your vision? Jenner infected himself with smallpox to test his vaccine.”

Hannibal frowned. “Jack, that was not at all the same situation as this. That was Jenner.” He dismissed.

“Yes that was Jenner, but why not you? ls it possible? Who knows? Natural? So what? Good science? You bet!”

“You're just trying to manipulate me, Jack and you’re not very good at it.”

“Yes, l am. So what? Look, cards on the table. l don't like you any more than you like me. lf we weren't partners... But the point is, we are partners. We're on the verge of something fantastic. Something important. l need you to carry it through with me.”

“You think this can really work?” Hannibal asked, already knowing the answer even as Jack nodded emphatically. Already knowing that a human alpha could certainly do as much as Francis the chimp had, if the Expectane worked. And that was the important test. Perhaps Jack was right… “Where would we find an egg?” Hannibal asked, trepidation creeping into his tone.

“It’s not a problem, leave it to me.” Jack smiled, before directing the driver to return them to campus.

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“Doctor Crawford?” Will was surprised to return from the coffee machine and find the alpha in his lab. They hadn’t actually been introduced but Will of course knew him… and was slightly glad that it wasn’t Doctor Lecter there. He was still not quite over making a fool of himself last time.

He couldn’t believe he didn’t even realise it was him! There were so many questions he would liked to have asked about Lecter’s research into omegan egg implantation. He had been a huge expert in in vitro fertilisation before his recent project.

“Hi! Will Graham isn’t it? Kade was too busy to introduce us.” Crawford smiled and held out his hand to shake, which Will obliged.

The alpha seemed slightly shifty, like he had been caught out. Will was generally pretty good at reading people and something was definitely off.

“Can I help you with something?” Will asked, trying not to seem too suspicious of the alpha.

“Me? Oh, no. No, I’m good. I was just…” Crawford looked around the room with a fond expression. “It’s a good lab, I was coming to just say goodbye to the place, you know? Lots of good memories here, some real breakthroughs.”

“Oh.” Will frowned but nodded. “Uh, right. Okay.”

“And I left some files.” Jack grinned, conspiratorially and went to the worktop next to the cryo unit, and the piles of paper there.

“Oh, right.” Will smiled back, realising the reason for the alpha’s behaviour. Likely the research papers belonged to the university as part of the funding deal. Will wasn’t about to stand in the way of another scientist claiming their own work.

He went back about his own work, setting his coffee down on the desk before sitting to look over the schematics for the new unit - his design. He was proud of it, it was going to be an even greater improvement than he’d first envisaged.

Will was absorbed until a shadow fell across him and he looked up to see Crawford heading on out, his arms precariously full of some files and other small objects.

“Doctor Crawford.”

The man stopped, as though frozen to the spot. He really did seem like he was concerned someone would catch him leaving with the files.

“Yes?” He turned and looked back at Will with a pleasant smile.

“I’m just… I’m embarrassed that I seem to have displaced you. I don’t need this amount of lab space, if you and Doctor Lecter wanted to share whilst you finish up your project, I’d be more than willing.”

He tried to maintain eye contact - and tried not to blush at the thought of sharing lab space with the eminent Doctor Lecter.

Jack Crawford broke into a beaming smile.

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“How are you getting on?” Jack called through the bathroom door.

Hannibal rolled his eyes. He really hadn’t needed his research partner calling through the door every five minutes whilst he tried to masturbate.

“I will be out when I’m out and you can wait downstairs until then.” Hannibal growled. He heard Jack chuckle and then the man’s footsteps retreat. Perhaps it was the unfamiliar surroundings of the ensuite in Jack’s guest room? Or perhaps he just wasn’t relaxed enough? Not to mention Jack’s lingering presence.

They had agreed to do the implantation in Jack's house, in fact it made sense for Hannibal to move into his spare room for the duration of the experiment. Better to monitor and react to any situations that might arise any time of the day or night. Jack had already brought some equipment from his own clinic - an ultrasound machine and a lot of medical necessities. And of course the egg, that he said had been given by a colleague no longer in need of it for their own research.

Everything was ready to go, except Hannibal.

Hannibal placed the, as yet empty, specimen jar on the sink and paced for a moment. He was in only his undershirt and boxers, having removed everything else - not wanting to accidentally mess one of his nice suits. But the near nudity in Jack's spare bathroom was not comfortable, and he wondered if he should have done this part back in his campus apartment.

Thoughts of the campus brought back thoughts of the lab. He couldn't help but wonder if it had changed much and how Will Graham was using it. He would soon see Monday when he and Jack went back - an agreement having been made with the omega.

It made sense, they still had drug ingredients that would otherwise go to waste, they were still studying Chilton for any side effects after having been born using the drug. There was still work they could do without funding if the space were available, until they were able to secure more. If Doctor Graham was gracious enough to let them share, then they really couldn't turn him down.

Such a gruff and wily omega, Hannibal smiled at the thought. It hadn't been altogether unpleasant to have the grumpy thing on top of him.

Hannibal felt a small ripple of pleasure before realising that he had begun to slowly fondle himself. He wasn't usually one to think of others in this way - to objectify them in some ways. But desperation to finish this had him conceding that he could allow it just this once.

He swallowed hard and rested one hand on the sink, leaning forward in that braced position as he shucked down his boxers and began to stroke himself.

He let the images flow, replaying Doctor Graham running into him. And then they were on the floor. Graham was being rude and snarly, but then they kissed and Hannibal ground his hips up searching for friction. It wasn't enough, so he allowed his mind to whisk their clothes away. Now they were naked and Will was kissing him, kissing his neck, rubbing himself against Hannibal's scent gland. And as Hannibal pushed his hips up he buried himself inside the omega.

Hannibal let out a grunt and began to pump his dick in rhythm with his imagined thrusts. He was so caught up in imagining Will, that he only managed to pull himself back together moments before he crested. Reclaiming there wherewithal to grab the specimen cup and ejaculate into it.

Which he did so with a cry, his free hand holding the vessel and leaving him with no support as his legs threatened to buckle. He staggered back and sat clumsily on the closed toilet seat, a little cum splattering his legs as he missed the cup. He held it steady once more as his balls

continued to draw up and he continued to stroke so that every little bit of his virile alpha semen emptied from him, leaving his knot aching with need.

Hannibal shuddered through the last few spurts and then gasped for breath, trying to level out as he trembled, marvelling at the force of the orgasm. He would allow himself some time to recover and then he pass the semen off to Jack so he could fertilise the egg, ready to implant in him.

And then they would see where they would go from there. Watch and wait to see if little Junior thrived.

4 Weeks Gestation

Chapter Summary

Hannibal and Will get to know each other, and Hannibal makes a fateful decision.

There was something distinctly odd about Doctor Hannibal Lecter.

Will couldn't quite put his finger on it, but ever since the Expectane team started to share his lab, something wasn't quite right.

The alpha was certainly attractive and suave. A real catch for someone in the right social circle, Will was sure. He was polite to a fault, if a little haughty. And seemed too preoccupied with his work to care much about what anyone else was up to in the lab. Which suited Will just fine, as he had no interest in having someone poke their noses into his research. He'd had enough of that as a student, from peers and teachers - much of it based in their belief that they knew better than an omega, even if it wasn't their specialist field of study. It had taken years for Will to earn his reputation and secure his place as the leading expert on the preservation of viable embryos. He wasn't about to take shit from some stuck up alpha, so he was glad that had not been an issue so far.

But there definitely *was* an issue.

It was when Lecter's visits to the bathroom increased that Will started to suspect what was happening.

The alpha clearly had a substance abuse problem.

It was the only thing to account for the frequency, and the sometimes faint and acrid odour of vomit on his return. And, now and then, little used medical vials were deposited in the bathroom trash. Truth was, this guy was a high functioning mess. There were other signs too, the more he thought about it, and really it wasn't that uncommon. A high pressure job that was reliant on results to get funding, long hours, intense schedules. He likely started out taking something as a pick me up and over time it got out of control.

Will wondered if it was really any of his business, and on a personal level perhaps it wasn't. But given that they shared a lab, he wasn't thrilled at the idea of having that unpredictable element anywhere near his research or equipment.

Today the doctor had returned to the lab from an extended trip to the bathroom, looking pale and sweaty and he definitely smelled of vomit. Will had to say something, going to Hannibal's desk and speaking gently -

“l know this is none of my business. l can't help but notice the lethargy, the nausea… the little vials you keep leaving in the wastepaper basket.” Will knew there was no way in which it wasn’t coming off as intrusive or rude, but honestly - he wasn’t going to risk the alpha causing mayhem in the lab by being too high to know what he’s doing or overdosing or some stupid shit like that. Will waited for Hannibal to respond, the alpha looking up at him from his desk, narrowing his eyes.

“Yes?” He replied gruffly, pretty much daring Will to continue. Which of course he did -

“Do you have a substance abuse problem?” He said it quietly enough that the rest of the lab didn't hear. Though Hannibal's response was a little louder.

“I beg your pardon!” Hannibal was clearly affronted, but that didn’t make the possibility any less true.

“Are you a junkie?” Will knew clarification wasn't what the alpha had meant, but he was damn well not going to be intimidated by him. Hannibal didn’t answer, merely glared at Will, his jaw tightening, looking as though he couldn’t quite find the words to respond. Probably holding back a few profanities, Will was sure. He tried again -

“There's nothing to be ashamed of, it's one of those things. I’m just concerned... It’s been going on for nearly a month, and l think you should see someone before it causes problems.”

“Doctor Graham-” Lecter began, his name an angry growl in the alpha’s mouth, but he was interrupted by Jack Crawford who seemed to have entered whilst they were talking and now was jumping into their conversation.

“Hey now, no need for any animosity. It’s uh…” Jack looked sort of desperate and Will quirked a brow at him, before hurriedly continuing. “There is uh… a tragic disease that afflicts the alphas of his village in Lithuania.”

Will raised a brow. “Bullshit,” he replied before thinking and both alphas seemed taken aback by his cursing. “I've never heard of such a thing.” He couldn’t help but be a little concerned that Doctor Crawford seemed to be covering for Lecter.

“I’m not surprised. lt's endemic to only a few places in all the world.” Crawford interjected with a solemn expression.

Will resisted the urge to roll his eyes, did they think he was stupid? “Well, what is it?”

“It's a terrible, debilitating… relentless, you know, kind of... fatness.” Crawford continued and for a moment Will thought Lecter was going to implode. His jaw had tightened and he looked like he was ready to take off Crawford’s head. Which, would almost be amusing if it didn’t put anything in the lab at risk.

“Fatness?” Will asked, incredulously. Lecter had been looking a little puffy now that he thought about it… which wasn’t entirely incongruent with him being a junkie...

“Striking thoroughbred alphas in their prime, turning them into big…” Crawford continued, now using his hands to demonstrate the size someone might grow too, puffing his cheeks out.

“That’s quite enough, Jack.” Lecter interjected. “There is no need to bore Doctor Graham with-”

“Oh no,” Will grinned, “by all means. I’m fascinated.” He couldn't help but enjoy the way Lecter squirmed, and he was more than positive this was all bullshit.

There was some grumbling, and Crawford seemed to take that as a cue to leave them to it, having clearly stirred the pot enough for one day. After he left Lecter hunched back over his desk making notes as though nothing had happened, clearly no plans to continue the conversation.

Will cleared his throat and, loudly, dragged over one of the other chairs to sit opposite Lecter. He placed his clasped hands on the desk and waited for the alpha to acknowledge him.

“Can I help you, Doctor?” Lecter asked coolly without looking up.

“I guess I’m just trying to decide whether you really are sick or not. Something is definitely going on with you.” Will changed tack, still concerned despite his amusement.

Hannibal placed down his pen and let out a defeated sigh. “This is vexing.”

“Don’t be… *vexed*,” Will grinned. “People get sick all the time, there’s no need to fret about it.”

There was a moment of silence before Lecter looked up at him, a strangely vulnerable expression flitting across his face. “I don’t entirely feel in control of my body.” The admission seemed to be more than an allowance, or an attempt to fobb Will off. There was some real pain there.

“Yeah, I get that. You seem like a bit of a control freak.” Will was amused by the sharp look that earned him. He had no idea that teasing such an uptight prig could be this much fun.

“Meaning?” Lecter near growled.

“Same tailored look, week in, week out - even Fridays when half the lab work in sweatpants. Same coat peg, the way you line up your pens. That odd little ritual with protein scramble breakfast every day.” Will realised he was demonstrating a lot of this with his hands, including the scrambling of eggs motion and mimicking the way the alpha savoured the first bite. He had to admit, the scramble always smelled pretty amazing.

“I prefer order, what’s wrong with that?” Lecter asked gruffly.

“Oh, nothing. Nothing at all. It was just an observation.” Will couldn’t even attempt to hold back the chuckle.

“I don’t enjoy being sick, the vials are my medication and I don’t appreciate your attitude. In fact, I don’t see how this is so amusing to you, *Doctor*.” Lecter’s eyes narrowed on him, and

maybe some omegas would have been intimidated.

“It’s just, alphas… I mean, no offence, but they’re pathetic when it comes to pain. Sure they can fight to the death over some macho bullshit. They have that brute strength but… You should try being an omega sometime.” Will huffed. “It's a nightmare. Your body goes peculiar with your first heat and doesn't stop until menopause. lt's a lifetime of leaking and swelling… and spotting and smears. Crippling cramps, raging hormones, yeasts! And that's if everything's normal.” Will shook his head.

“I don't want to be an omega.” Lecter growled.

Will raised a brow at that, an odd thing to say and with such ire. “Don’t worry, you couldn't hack it,” he retorted before pushing the chair back and returning to his own station, feeling Lecter’s eyes on him as he went. Junkie or not, something was definitely off about that alpha.

*

Hannibal stood side on to the mirror in his bedroom. He definitely looked bigger - the almost indiscernible bump where the baby grew changed the shape of his usual alpha physique. In fact, the hormones he had mixed with the Expectane in order to carry the baby, were changing his shape entirely. He was generally rounder, softer, retaining water. He was looking more and more omegan.

Scientifically it was fascinating, he planned to catalogue absolutely everything - there could be several papers in this aside from their actual plans for the use of Expectane. Maybe it was that thought that kept him from feeling too strange about the whole thing. He certainly had a greater appreciation and respect for what Doctor Graham had said - for the things he had described omega’s went through. Which of course as a doctor, Hannibal already knew all this to a degree. But having someone put it so indelicately - and coupled with his own increasing experiences - he was certainly gaining a different view on it.

He wouldn’t have considered himself in any way chauvinistic in the past, but he was realising the reality was, all alphas were to a degree even without intent. This experience was certainly addressing that - having to deal with only a fraction of what omega’s went through. And he wasn’t exactly a person who considered himself to have anything other than thoroughly alphan traits.

In fact, he wondered as he stroked his hand over the tiny curve of his belly, perhaps the reason this wasn’t completely throwing him for a mental loop was because of the baby?

Baby?

Embryo. Fetus. Experiment.

He forced his hand to drop and made himself move away from the mirror. He wasn’t omegan. He wasn’t going to establish that aggressively protective bond over his child - *experiment* - that some people theorised could potentially begin at fertilisation. This wasn’t his baby. Wasn’t a baby.

He shuddered with the anger that thought strangely sent through him and then felt a pang of guilt for potentially stressing the baby.

His jaw was tightly clenched and he looked down at the bed, where lay several pairs of pants that he'd had let out just a little. Hannibal released a deep breath, which halted when he heard the front door open.

Hannibal made his way down the stairs to see Jack stood by the front door, looking contemplative.

On seeing Hannibal he pulled on a slight smile but looked harried.

"I've just seen Bella, she… I've agreed to be her doctor." The tone left no room for a reply - he had made this decision, perhaps against his own better judgement. But certainly the love he clearly still had for his ex-wife was a factor. Hannibal knew it was none of his business and was glad when Jack changed the subject.

"Are you okay? You look a little flushed."Jack started towards him, and Hannibal knew the concern was professional - as Jack would be worried for any of his expecting patients.

Hannibal gave a dismissive shake of his head. "I'm fine, just… hormones."

Jack nodded sagely, clearly having had plenty of experience with hormonal pregnancies, "tell me about! But hey, not long now. One more week and then we can, um, end the experiment and get this all written up."

He wondered if Jack's reference to his impending, and essentially planned, miscarriage was as jarring for him as it was for Hannibal.

*

Will hated these things.

Sure it was a buffet dinner and dancing and all very fine, and it wasn't even that - it wasn't his working class roots stoking his inner snobbery for actual snobs. What really bothered Will was that it was a pharma networking event.

Everyone attending was a scientist looking to get funded for their research, or sell their amazing new drug or scientific breakthrough to big faceless companies that would then repackage it and sell it to the public at an, often prohibitively, extortionate rate.

If it wasn't part of his contract for funding with the university that Will attend these things, he wouldn't. As it was he was just hoping to run into Kade Prurnell early so that she could see he had showed up, then leave when everyone was busy with dancing. He really had no intention of trying to schmooze with pharma big wigs in order to justify the university funding by finding his new process a buyer. He hated that he had to have people interested in buying the new cryo units in order to ensure continued funding from the university.

Will made a note not to have too much from the free bar and end up ranting half of this to Prurnell.

He helped himself at the buffet and looked around for a seat. He could see a lot of the lab techs sat together, and as much as he wanted to join them, he knew he'd get shit for it. He should be mingling and networking, not sitting with his assistants.

Will spotted Prurnell, who looked decidedly like she was heading his way. The false smile on her face changed his mind about running into her, so he turned to make an escape towards the bar. But as he turned he walked straight into a solid form, just managing to keep his plate from spilling all over the place.

He'd run into someone's back, and when the alpha turned with a snarl, he just was the farthest from thrilled he could possibly be, to discover it was Hannibal Lecter.

The alpha clenched his jaw and glowered at him, and… looked pretty damn good in a formal suit - though the jacket was a little ill fitting. It definitely could have done with being taken in a bit. The thought sparked a thought of the conversation about this apparent illness of his. Maybe there was some truth in it? Perhaps he wore it to hide the body shape he was conscious of? It caused a pang of sympathy in him.

"Hey." Will greeted, for want of anything better to say or do given that he had collided with the man (again), and conscious of him being one of the few non-pharma people in the room he could arguably be seen talking to and not be accused of avoiding buyers. After all, talking with other researchers could be seen as networking, he was sure.

"Doctor Graham." Lecter greeted gruffly, inclining his head slightly.

"Please, call me Will. Everyone calls me Will except you. Even Crawford and I know him even less than I know you." Will chuckled.

"That is because he is overly familiar with people." Lecter's words sounded like an insult to a degree and Will wondered how friendly the two colleagues actually were.

"Oh, um… yeah. I guess he is." Will smiled, before his attention was caught by the plate in Hannibal's hand. There were three of the most fancy looking pigs in blankets Will had ever seen. "Ooo! I didn't spot those at the buffet, I love these." Will plucked one from Hannibal's plate and popped it in his mouth before he even realised what he was doing.

For his part, Hannibal didn't seem to register it for a moment either, or he did but it took a that long for him to realise it wasn't right. As though it were perfectly normally for some random person to take food from another's plate. As though it were perfectly acceptable for an omega to take food from an alpha like that, as though he'd been taking from an alpha who provided for him. Taking it from *his* alpha, in which case it wasn't taking at all and was perfectly acceptable...

Will's circular thoughts crashed into complete embarrassment and he hoped his face wasn't as red as he was sure it was.

There was a moment of awkward silence which had Will sighing inwardly. This was worse than talking to pharma reps. They barely said two words to each other during a working day, so why would it be any different here?

Will was just eyeing up the rather promising prospect of the bar again when Lecter responded.

“You can call me Hannibal.”

“Oh! Um, okay…” Will wasn’t sure how he really felt about that, he was sort of used to - and kind of enjoying - being aloof and salty with the alpha. Though perhaps it was weird not to be on first name terms after having just taken food from the man. He decided not to think about that again. Ever.

Before he could say much more he was thankfully rescued by Prurnell and Crawford intercepting them at the same time. The band struck up on the stage at the end of the room and the party seemed to be really setting in. Will considered that it actually might be too late to escape now.

“Good to see you here Doctor Graham,” Prurnell smiled at him before giving a curt nod to Hannibal. “Doctor Lecter.”

Hannibal returned the nod and the atmosphere turned decidedly icey.

“Hannibal, there you are,” Jack hurried to speak. “I think we should be going now.”

“I hadn’t realised you were invited.” Prurnell sniped at Crawford before Hannibal could answer.

“Our invitations for our research were not contingent on being funded by the university.” Hannibal replied, betraying no emotion whatsoever, despite Prurnell’s snide tone.

Will rolled his eyes, feeling very much like an omega fated to be exposed to the ridiculous posturing of three idiots whose only claim to superiority is the ownership of a knot.

Kade turned her attentions back to Will -

“Doctor Graham, there are some very influential people here that I’d like to introduce you to, if you’d care to join me?” She offered her arm and Will couldn’t help but flinch. It was such an alpha gesture - show the little omega around as though they couldn’t go it alone.

Will felt his lips curl into a near snarl and he was just about to snap at her that he didn't want to talk to pharma reps because he found it reprehensible, not because he was a delicate omega who needed an alpha’s guidance.

Before the words could form, Hannibal spoke - “l always loved this song. Would you like to dance?”

It took Will a moment to realise that Hannibal was addressing him, and he was now taking Will’s plate, stacking it on his own hand handing both to Prurnell like she was one of the wait staff.

There was something in the tone that made his offer so unlike Prurnell’s. It wasn't posturing, it was clearly a rescue, though one that seemed based in camaraderie rather than superiority.

“I… don't know how…” Will started, an automatic line he used to fob off many alphas when approached for a dance, but he realised that would just make him seem like the kind of omega Prurnell thought he was. And he hated to admit, something in him didn’t want to deny this rescue.

“I’ll teach you.” Hannibal’s low purr was enough to send so many shivers over his skin that Will hated himself all the more for it and found himself chanting in his head - *don’t go home with this guy, don’t go home with this guy, don’t go home with this guy…*

“Um, sure.” Will finally replied, taking Hannibal’s offered hand and allowing himself to be lead out onto the dancefloor just as the band passed the intro of *I’ve got you under my skin.*

Dancing was one of those things that Will kind of enjoyed but was loathe to admit because it was an activity usually between an alpha and omega. Will hated the presumption that often came with it, though he felt that he knew Hannibal Lecter well enough from their daily working together, to believe the man had no ulterior motive. That he had just been being nice and rescuing Will from Prurnell and the pharma people and… Will was almost disappointed.

Almost. Just that little part of him. The part that had eyes and could see how attractive the alpha was. If they didn’t work together and this was a nightclub or bar, Will might have been receptive. The idea made him wince inwardly - not exactly the most professional of thoughts

He looked at the band, the people, he looked over Hannibal’s shoulder and generally avoided looking at the alpha at all until Hannibal said -

“Not fond of eye contact, are you?”

A little startled at the call out, Will huffed but still didn’t meet the alpha’s eyes, despite the dare in it.

“I’ve noticed in the lab. At first I thought it was just me, and that you were being rude but…”

Will cut Hannibal off to set him straight. “Eyes are distracting. You see too much. You don’t see enough. And it’s hard to focus when you’re thinking those whites are really white or they must have hepatitis, or is that a burst vein? So I try to avoid eyes whenever possible.”

As if to challenge the point of rudeness, Will looked at Hannibal then, meeting his eyes and wishing he hadn’t. The alpha was wearing a charming and amused smile, he nodded sagely. “You do seem to be an intuitive sort of person, it’s clear from the way you work that you have a great deal of empathy. I would proffer that many see it is a trait of many omegans, but I neither think that’s true, nor wish to incur your wrath at invoking the stereotype.” Hannibal was still smiling as he spoke and Will wasn’t quite sure how to react. “I fear Director Prurnell can be a little…”

“Chauvinistic?” Will supplied with a wry smile.

“Unfortunately she is one of these people who assumes omegas to be soft and gentle. She sees you as a fragile little teacup.” Hannibal studied his face as he said the words, as though looking for signs of his being fine china.

“And how do you see me?” Will asked, his voice little more than a purr, though that hadn’t been his intention. He had meant it as a challenge - to see how *chauvinistic* this alpha was, instead it sounded almost like a flirtation. He had no idea why he was reacting so strongly to this alpha - it felt almost beyond his control.

Hannibal studied him further, clearly taking in everything from the curve of his lips to his wild hair, before smiling. “The mongoose I want under the house when the snakes slither by.”

Will blinked, taking in the evaluation of him.

“How do you see yourself, Will?” Hannibal crooned the words.

“Please don’t psychoanalyze me.” Will’s tone was low but amused. “You won’t like me when I’m psychoanalyzed.” He wanted to look away but found that he couldn’t - completely enthralled by Hannibal’s smile. “I thought you were a fertility specialist, shouldn’t you leave the psychology to other doctors, Doctor?”

Hannibal huffed a short chuckle that Will found uncomfortably alluring.

“You could say it is a personal interest, a hobby. Along with cooking and swimming.” Hannibal’s words were soft and Will realised - other than the conversation about his possible substance abuse several weeks earlier - they hadn’t shared personal information before. Which didn’t make him any less startled when Hannibal asked, “do you have any hobbies Will?” before executing a rather skilled turn that had Will gripping tight to the alpha leading the dance.

“Fishing.” Will replied.

“Ah, relaxing I should imagine. Do you cook your catch?”

Will raised a brow at the alpha’s question. He was sure it wasn’t a reference to the idea of omega’s in the kitchen, especially given Hannibal’s own interest in cooking. But… was this small talk? Maybe the alpha was trying to find something they had in common outside of the workplace? Was Hannibal just passing the time as they danced or did he really want to know more about Will? Will was certainly not the best judge of these things - he tried to avoid people, and alphas in particular, as much as possible. The thought struck him, like a punch in the gut, that this might be flirting.

“Um, sometimes…” Will replied self-consciously. All the more self-conscious when Hannibal pulled him fractionally closer and changed the position of his hand on his lower back. Will suppressed a shiver at the touch.

This alpha was so strange, he had seemed so aloof, and for the weeks that they had shared a lab he was grumpy and private. Will had made a point of not bothering him. But despite that the alpha seemed like someone who could be charming and suave for the right person. Perhaps was being held back with concerns over his illness and the physical effects that was having? Will clenched his jaw, wondering how any omega could be so shallow as to have an issue with such a thing as *relentless fatness*. If indeed that was genuine, which… he was starting to believe was the case though he had no real reason to do so.

“Perhaps, one day I could cook your catch, I’m sure we could find a suitable recipe.” Hannibal’s smile was almost predatory - so alphan. Will was equally irked and interested.

“Are you… asking me on a date, Doctor Lecter?” Will asked, almost cautiously. Hannibal’s smile was lopsided and somewhat predatory as he pulled Will flush to him under the guise of dancing.

Instead of the response Will had expected - Hannibal’s breath so close to his ear - the alpha froze. As Will felt the plumpness of the alpha against him he immediately realised the same thing that Hannibal had maybe forgotten for a short while.

Hannibal was self-conscious now, putting an arms length between them almost instantly, their dance falling out of step and becoming awkward. He looked a little pale and was moving in a calculated fashion to avoid their touching more than necessary.

“Hannibal, it’s-” Will tried to find the words. Sure the alpha was attractive and there was something about his manner that Will strangely liked, but he stopped himself from reassuring him that he found him attractive even if he was conscious of his shape and weight. It felt too familiar for how little they knew each other really, and moreover, Will wasn’t sure why he felt he should say anything at all. Perhaps it would be the nice thing to do, to reassure the man? But there was no way to do so without coming off like he was interested. And, whilst part of him very much was, Will certainly had no intention of declaring it in any way.

They had started to slow down before the music finished, but when it did Hannibal dropped his hold immediately and took a step back.

“Thank you for the dance Doctor Graham. It’s time I was going.” Hannibal gave a curt nod and walked off before Will had chance to respond.

He watched Hannibal go, feeling a little wounded though not quite sure why.

*

Hannibal grit his teeth, feeling like an idiot as he stalked towards Jack with the intention of their leaving as he had already suggested.

He had so enjoyed the attention of the omega that he had forgotten himself completely. Not just the baby, but also his own better judgement - it wasn’t like him to become infatuated in this manner. But this omega had some power over him that he was at a loss to explain.

Over the last few weeks he had observed Will Graham in their working day. He was impressive - intelligent and passionate about his work. The sort of omega he might have imagined himself with, if he had the time and interest in such things. And if not for his current situation.

Before all this he did not want for companionship. He had no time for romance and relationships, but he was no stranger to the touch of an omega. He might have even considered bedding Will Graham, had they met each other more casually.

Perhaps it was the hormones, but Hannibal had felt a great draw towards the omega that had made him both inconsiderate of his own condition and overly confident in his prowess. He wanted to know Will better, maybe even date as Will had queried. But it was impossible, at least until their research project was over.

Hannibal's hand went instinctively to his belly.

"Hannibal." Kade Prurnell still had Jack cornered at the edge of the dancefloor but addressed him as he returned, sans omega. "Who is the omega?" There was a humouring grin on her face.

Thinking initially she referred to Will Graham, Hannibal was confused and quirked a brow.

"Kade thinks we have secretly been experimenting on an omega." Jack chuckled dismissively. "I assured her, it's nonsense. Just compiling our previous research with the chimps."

Prurnell was eyeing him and waiting for his answer, ignoring Jack.

"A preposterous idea." Hannibal retorted, a little more sternly than he had planned, before forcing some mirth. "Director Prurnell, I'm at a loss to know why you would believe not only that we would do such a thing, but also that any omega would take an unregulated drug during their pregnancy."

Prurnell narrowed her eyes, but clearly had no response to his words.

"Well, early start in the morning," Jack clapped his hands together lightly, "time to get going."

Prurnell watched them suspiciously as they made their way to the exit.

"We need to end this now," Jack's words were low and stern. "We have the data we need, I can fax the reports over to the pharma company in the morning. Don't take any more Expectane."

Hannibal made a great effort not to scan the room for Will before he left, knowing it best to ignore the omega and any urges he might be feeling, as Jack's words sunk in.

*

Hannibal stood in front of the mirror in his room, he was a little more plump than he had been. Even in just three months, the hormones had softened his body all the more and the bump was slightly bigger - pronounced by the changes in his shape. It was bizarre, and whilst still scientifically interesting, there was something more than that. Something that was getting harder to deny, as he found himself increasingly running his hand over his belly. He had even noticed the look of concern on Jack's face when he'd caught him doing it more than once without even realising it.

He let out a heavy sigh. He'd never really thought about having children. Always too busy with his career to think about even settling down with an omega. This was an option he

certainly hadn't considered…

He pushed the thought from his mind, allowing himself to think about Will Graham instead as he changed into his pyjamas. The omega was gruff and rude and despite this - or because of it? - utterly charming.

Perhaps if not for the experiment, he might have tried to get to know the omega better. Perhaps? He knew that was likely not the case, he had never bothered with much more than casual flings in the past and he couldn't see that for Will. But in all honesty, he hadn't before thought of anyone in the way he was thinking about Will Graham. In fact the memory of their dance together was making his pulse race a little, despite how it ended.

He was struck by the realisation that, had he not felt so exhausted from the evening, he might have brought himself to climax with thoughts of the omega. But as it was he settled into bed and fell quickly into a deep sleep.

In the morning, Hannibal woke hard and in need of release, wondering if it was as much a result of his jumbled dreams of the night before, as it was the hormones that gave him this appetite.

Only minutes after his climax, grunting Will's name as his come coated his fist, his Expectane reminder alarm went off. He should have ignored it, it had been agreed that yesterday was the final day - the end of the first trimester. He didn't need to take Expectane any more. He could just stop and allow his body to naturally reject the fetus. Without the hormones it would be broken down as a foreign body and absorbed back within him.

Hannibal didn't ignore the alarm.

With neither thought nor hesitation, he went to the bathroom, washed his hands and then administered the Expectane as he had done for the previous few weeks. And though it was likely completely unrelated, he oddly found himself thinking about Will Graham as he did so.

4 Months Gestation

Chapter Summary

Realisations, confrontations and revelations!

Chapter Notes

Ughhhh Friday's are crazy days for me, and I am so crap about remembering to post on them. Sorry :(

Hannibal looked in his full length bedroom mirror and turned to the side. He was dressing more casually now as it afforded greater discretion. His suits - often described by Jack as overly formal - had been replaced by understated slacks that he'd had to have tailored to fit, and oversized shirts. Though more often than not he also ended up in the wonderfully soft and warm cashmere sweater that hung loosely - and felt so good against his skin. It was a deep enough red that it went with almost everything - or so he justified when he realised how much he wore it.

It was a comfort and, he had to admit, the fact that he often hung it next to Will's jacket in the lab cloakroom if he got a little warm, added to that. By rights he should fold it, and hanging it would eventually ruin the neckline - but it was a habit he didn't intend to break when it resulted in the sweater being lightly infused with Will's scent.

At 4 months pregnant, his hormones were doing even stranger things than they had been before and it was almost unsettling how calming the omega’s scent was to him. He wondered if pregnant omegas generally felt the same about alphas of their acquaintance. Stranger still was that this reaction seemed to be restricted only to Doctor Graham. There were several other omegas in his professional circle, including colleagues, and yet it was only Will that calmed him in this way.

In fact, since the pharma event he had gone out of his way to spend time with the omega.

First he noticed that Will always bought a very poor coffee on his way into the lab. The smell of it turned Hannibal’s stomach so that was more than enough reason to start brewing some of his wonderful grounds at home and bringing in a thermos with enough for two. The rich scent of the coffee was enough to lure Will after the second day of offering - saying that he had made way far much for one person and it made sense to save Will wasting time at the terrible campus cafe on his way in. The omega was less hesitant over accepting the pastries

Hannibal started to bring in the following day, but of course those he made enough for all the lab staff. He did wish to be at least a little discreet.

When he noticed Will brought in rushed and poorly made sandwiches for his lunches, Hannibal decided to once more step in. He began making extra portions of his own lunch and inviting Will to share. Which, after some encouragement, he did.

This had all resulted in not only a better rapport and an excellent atmosphere in the lab, but also a great deal of their lunch breaks spent eating and talking together and… flirting.

Hannibal wasn't really sure what to do with the admittedly affirming, attention - as much as he really had become interested in Will and had no desire to see any less of him. But with such a huge secret, which was not going away any time soon - or ever - it felt like an impossible situation.

The alpha studied his reflection, pulling his top tight around his belly to show the complete fullness of what was now clearly a pregnancy if anyone cared to look so closely. The thought of Will getting close enough, to see enough, filled Hannibal with conflicting feelings of fear and excitement.

His mind couldn't help returning to the idea of Will being just the sort of omega he might have considered having children with. Though not like this.

Part of Hannibal wanted to resent the baby, or at least curse the timing of having met Will Graham at this point. Though he couldn't say it would have changed his mind in this course of action. He smoothed his hands over the bump and felt a strong flutter of movement. His lips curved into a smile, no he could never resent little Junior.

This was becoming less and less professional curiosity, and more about his ever burgeoning, and undeniable feelings for the little life inside him.

*

Hannibal didn't at first notice Jack enter the lab, not realising he was there until the man drew a sharp breath that was almost a gasp.

At the time, Hannibal had been sat at his desk removing his sweater. It was getting a little warm with some of the equipment running and so he stripped out of it. Not realising that he had an audience, nor that his shirt rode up a little - caught in the sweater.

"Hannibal-" Jack started, eyes wide. Hannibal realised his mistake immediately and pulled his shirt back into place before anyone but Jack saw.

Jack seemed at a loss for whatever words he had been about to say, instead glowering at Hannibal with a raging anger.

Hannibal couldn't blame him.

This was *their* experiment and they were both equally invested, they had essentially made this baby together, keeping this from Jack had been a terrible necessity. He knew that had he

told him, Jack would have tried to talk him into ending the experiment, possibly even successfully. And he couldn't have allowed that.

"Jack, allow me to explain."

Jack continued to glare at him, forcing words through a clenched jaw - "Hannibal, what the… We need to talk," the alpha growled.

Hannibal gave a curt nod and stood, indicating the storage room off from the main lab. "The samples are through here."

He watched Jack's jaw flex as he stomped into the storage room, leaving Hannibal to follow behind him.

Jack wheeled on him as soon as Hannibal closed the door.

"What were you thinking, Hannibal? Are you nuts?"

"I should have informed you." Hannibal allowed, interrupted before he could continue-

"Informed me? Hannibal!" Jack clearly realised he was getting loud and so lowered his tone to a snarl. "You were meant to terminate the experiment."

"You mean terminate my baby."

"It wasn't a baby back then, it was a collection of cells that your body would have absorbed." Jack's tone was several levels above exasperation. "I can't believe you did this."

"I… wished to continue the experiment to its natural conclusion."

"Natural!" Jack nearly shouted the word. "Hannibal, you're an alpha. This… I can't even… don't you understand how dangerous this could be? The complications? Not to mention we don't have F.D.A. approval for using this on an omega let alone a damn alpha! If… *when* word of this gets out, our careers are over."

Hannibal grit his teeth, his fists balled tight against this side as he watched Jack pace.

Before he had chance to even think about something to respond to Jack's absolutely correct assertions, Jack let out a heavy sigh and stopped pacing.

"Okay, this is… a fucked up situation. But it needs to be handled right."

Hannibal drew a shaky breath, waiting for Jack to suggest a termination.

"Get your coat. Pack up any notes and things you need from the lab. You can't be here. You can't be out and about like this. I mean…" He shook his head and looked Hannibal up and down. "How long did you think you could go unnoticed in this condition?" He started to pace again. "We're going to my clinic and running an ultrasound and go from there. We need to make sure the baby is healthy before we even think about anything else. Then you're moving

back in with me until this is all over, one way or another. Just… Dammit Hannibal, you're having a baby!"

Hannibal found himself nodding along, Jack's words filling him with a hope and dread. Of course, he was right - at some point he would have had to stop coming to the lab, even if it meant no longer getting to see Will every day. He just needed to focus on the baby.

"Junior," Hannibal corrected.

"Come again?" Jack frowned.

"The baby, I've been calling it Junior."

Hannibal could swear Jack paled a little at his words.

*

Hannibal seemed weird at the best of times. And clearly, whatever the illness was that was affecting him, was taking its toll. Will couldn't pretend that he hadn't noticed the weight gain before the alpha disappeared from the lab. Nor the rather musky and rich scent that seemed to come off him in waves every time they were near each other. The thought made Will's eye twitch.

Will shifted from foot to foot on Jack Crawford's doorstep. Bev had told him that she had heard that Hannibal had moved in with Jack after their funding was cancelled. Will guessed because he lived on campus and perhaps the housing was linked to his position? Either way, Will was glad that Hannibal had a friend looking out for him whilst they wrapped up their study and looked for potential further funding, especially if he was as sick as he seemed to be.

Now standing on their doorstep, Will wasn't entirely sure what he was doing. A few weeks earlier Hannibal had stopped coming to the lab, and after a couple of weeks Will had cornered Jack and he'd gruffly explained Hannibal's condition had flared up and he'd be working from home. Hannibal himself hadn't contacted Will, which he was trying not to be irked by considering how friendly they'd become. He wondered if part of him was there to confront Hannibal about the lack of contact… but he was pretty sure for the most part it was because he missed seeing the alpha every day.

Either way, he was - for some reason - carrying a whole bunch of paperwork as a ruse that he found in the storage room. Holding it to his chest like a shield - an excuse to come over.

Will rang the doorbell and waited.

When Hannibal answered, Will looked at his feet, holding the files in front of him as he muttered, "Uh, I thought you might need these."

"Will?" Hannibal sounded confused to see him and Will, forcing himself to make eye contact, realised it was as much horror as surprise.

“Boy did I misjudge this,” Will muttered his inner thoughts without intending to. “I mean… I didn’t mean to disturb you, I-”

“No… you're not disturbing me. I’m just surprised to see you here.” Hannibal said quickly, looking slightly less terrified but his scent gave away that he was still not altogether happy with the situation. Will clenched his jaw.

“I brought these notes I found in the store room.” Will held them out and Hannibal hesitated a moment before taking them and holding them in front of himself. “I, uh… thought you might need them.”

Hannibal had put on even more weight, Will noted. It didn’t look bad on him, in fact he had something of a glow about him. He was sort of beautiful.

“Thanks.” Hannibal looked down at the papers and Will’s cheeks burned. It would only take a glance for him to realise that it was just junk. Likely something Hannibal or Jack left in storage whilst rummaging for something else and not missed it in the least. Something easily printed again if needed.

If Hannibal noticed, he didn’t show it. He just continued to look nervous before finally clearing his throat and asking, “would you like to come in?”

Jack’s house was not as he expected. He took in the decor whilst Hannibal lead him to the lounge as the alpha went to the kitchen to make them drinks. It was a lot more twee than Will would have pegged and he had to wonder if that was the hand of the ex-Mrs Crawford he’d heard the lab techs talk about.

He took a seat on the overstuffed sofa and waited.

When Hannibal returned with cups of tea, Will expected him to sit in one of the chairs, but instead he sat on the sofa - not so far from Will. Interestingly he looked just as bewildered as Will when he realised where he’d sat, as though he hadn’t had much control over doing so.

As he set their drinks down on the coffee table, Will got a better look at him. Despite the oversized clothing, clearly meant to obscure his shape, he was larger than Will had seen before, but he really was still incredibly attractive.

The aroma of his tea was interrupted by the familiar and warming scent Hannibal exuded, and suddenly Will realised his missing Hannibal went deeper than just a loss of good coffee and conversation.

“Do you believe in true mates?” Will asked, as much to himself as to Hannibal and unable to hold back the question that hung over him. How the hell did he feel such a strong connection to this alpha? Especially as it definitely wasn’t something he had ever welcomed… before at least.

“No.” Hannibal replied, raising a curious eyebrow.

“No, neither do l, so it can't be that.” Will mused, scratching the stubble on his cheek, thoughtfully.

“Can't be what?” Hannibal asked, his tone now a little more gruff.

Will looked at him for a moment, trying to work it out - finding himself pleased when Hannibal’s expression relaxed a little. “l just have this strong sense of… connection with you. Like we share some sort of… I don’t know.”

Like we blur into each other, like we’re conjoined.

Will shrugged and a silence fell between them - Hannibal wearing a growing look of concern.

“Hannibal, what’s wrong?” Will asked, almost nervous to hear the answer.

“Does my body disgust you?” Hannibal asked, a slight note of a dare in his tone.

“What?” It took a moment to realise Hannibal’s self-consciousness over his size was bearing down on him. As a scientist, Will was sympathetic to Hannibal’s concerns over his condition, as a friend he wished he could make him feel better.

Will placed a comforting hand on the alpha’s leg. “No. No, not at all. l mean, l, uh… I don’t mind upholstery on a man. ln fact, l was madly in love with my classmate Franklyn all through junior school and he was very... portly.” Will smiled, trying to seem as comforting as possible.

“Maybe it's physical?” Hannibal said, looking intently at him again once more. “This connection.”

“What? Um, yes,” Will felt his cheeks redden all the more. “It’s definitely physical.”

“I will admit, Will, that I find you attractive, despite your… disposition.” Hannibal’s tone was a return to the banter, the rapport they had begun to establish in the lab.

“Oh, well, thanks I guess,” Will chuckled. “I find you attractive despite your being a pompous ass.” A blush rose on his cheeks. Had he come here to say this? Or had he come to just check on the man he seemed to have an inordinate amount of concern for? Will wasn’t sure, but either way he felt an inner turmoil. He wanted to give into his physical attraction with the alpha he had come to enjoy spending time with… but letting someone close wasn’t something he could easily do. He removed his hand from Hannibal’s leg and continued. “I uh, l get these sudden, these pangs of concern for your... for your wellbeing-”

Will was still trying to find the words to describe this strange link he felt with Hannibal, when Hannibal suddenly leaned in and kissed him. It was a quick kiss, but by no means a peck.

For a brief moment, Will opened to the kiss before he realised what he was doing and drew back, the hungry look in Hannibal’s eyes sent a tremor through him.

His mind reeled through several emotions, before finally settling on righteous indication. Wrongly, he knew. Hannibal had made his interest clear and he had reciprocated, but now it was too much. Too overwhelming - this connection they had consumed so much of him and it terrified him.

“What the hell?!” Will spluttered, scrambling away from Hannibal and to his feet.

“Will, I… I apologise, I thought… I thought that-”

“You thought wrong.” Will snapped the words, despite the lie in them. Despite the strong draw he felt - wanting to fall into Hannibal’s arms, kiss, make love. Damn, he wanted those things and had done for a while now, but… It was just too hard. He was too used to keeping people at arm’s length, he wasn’t prepared for the overwhelming emotions of letting someone close. “I…” no further words came, he stormed out the door.

*

Hannibal had stared after Will in shock, realising he had made a complete misstep.

For some reason the omega was drawn to him, felt a connection between them - and Hannibal did too. He had considered the attraction to be personal and, yes, sexual, and assumed the same of Will. So much so that when his hormone crazed mind had perceived the interest and a potential opening, he had tried to kiss him - against his own better judgement.

It was clearly the wrong move, and it left Hannibal feeling all more conscious of his body, even though Will had said his size was not an issue. Well, his size might not be, but the reason for it was another thing. Perhaps Will wasn’t interested, or perhaps he was and Hannibal had been too forward? Not that it mattered - what he had done was reckless and hormone driven. He should forget all about Will Graham, and yet...

He was considering calling the omega when the front door opened and Jack huffed into the living room, stripping his coat and throwing it into a chair. Hannibal schooled his scowl, reminding himself this was Jack’s home to treat as he would… whilst also wondering at how Bella put up with him for so long.

Before Hannibal could do or say anything, Jack boomed -

“Kade Prurnell! I swear to god!” He dropped into the chair opposite the sofa, “ran into her at the lab, and she downright accused us of once more having an omegan subject, someone we coerced into unapproved testing. And what’s more… get this - she thinks it’s Bella.”

“Bella…?” Hannibal took that in and tried to see it from Prurnell’s viewpoint. “She thinks we coerced your ex-wife to test Expectane.” Hannibal’s tone was incredulous.

“Right?!” Jack barked a laugh, “she’s clearly never met Bella if she thinks that woman can be convinced into anything she doesn’t want to do.” He shook his head. “Anyway, I denied it of course, but she’s definitely getting more suspicious. Might not be a bad idea if she keeps thinking it’s Bella. Not that I’ll tell Bella… I really don’t need that argument.”

Jack was getting to his feet again, making his way to the kitchen whilst calling back over his shoulder, “what’s for dinner?”

Hannibal’s scowl returned.

*

In the end, Hannibal waited until the following morning to contact Will - sending an email to his work account so as not to seem so overly personal as calling him. It didn’t feel right to leave this unresolved one way or another.

In truth, there was another reason he didn’t call. This connection Will spoke of, that he felt so deeply himself, had him on the verge of confessing all to the omega - consequences be damned. Somewhere deep down a little voice was telling him that revealing his condition to Will would either result in a clean break or a potential mate. However, Hannibal was not so frazzled by his hormones to realise that there were many other options in between, including Will potentially reporting them.

Really, he should leave well alone, but he couldn’t let things remain so poorly between them. He would rather end on an apology if there was to be a final interaction.

To:Graham, Dr William
From: Lecter, Dr Hannibal
Subject: The Standard Monograph on the study of Chrysalides in Cryostasis Applications

Dear Doctor Graham

Please accept my sincerest apologies. I believe I misunderstood you and overstepped my bounds.

Sincerely,
Doctor Hannibal Lecter

Given how busy Will often was, Hannibal was surprised to see a response from him arrive within the half hour.

To: Lecter, Dr Hannibal
From: Graham, Dr William
Subject: Do you actually have a question about my paper?

Dear Doctor Lecter

You’re sorry you kissed me?

Sincerely,
Will Graham

Hannibal frowned, rereading the email a few times, each in the flirtatious tone Will often used over coffee or lunch. Surely he wasn’t misunderstanding that?

To:Graham, Dr William
From: Lecter, Dr Hannibal
Subject: Apologies for the ruse, I wanted to ensure you'd read the email

Dear Will

I am sorry that it upset you. I would like to make it up to you. Perhaps I can take you to dinner?

Yours,
Hannibal

It was several hours before Will finally replied. Hours in which Hannibal nervously cleaned his room, changed his sheets, and for want of a better term, found himself - nesting.

To: Lecter, Dr Hannibal
From: Graham, Dr William
Subject: Very manipulative, Doctor.

I'm free at 7pm on Friday. I'll meet you at Reba's - the new restaurant on the high street. You're buying.

Will

Hannibal blinked, his heart hammering and a distinctive flutter in his belly as his baby reacted to the excitement coursing through him. Perhaps giving into this - telling Will - would be a good idea after all?

*

Will felt like an asshole.

It was so easy to flirt with Hannibal, because he genuinely enjoyed his company. Or at the least was amused and intrigued by the alpha. It was hilarious to think anyone really could be that much of a prig.

Will did question whether his attraction was down to his hormones, but his heat wasn't due for another couple of months. And really, it wasn't like Hannibal wasn't exactly his type. Maybe not the way he groomed and styled himself - though when he dressed casually Will couldn't help but admire the view. But certainly, Will was attracted to people who were intelligent, interesting, had a passion for science - things they had in common. Balanced by the things they didn't - he couldn't deny that what he'd sampled so far of Hannibal's cooking, left him hungry for more.

Physically, Will found him very desirable, and was sad that the alpha felt self conscious about himself.

He knew without even having to consider it, that the reason he had been hesitant despite his participation in flirting, was his own hangup. The reason he had been so indignant and left when Hannibal kissed him was his usual self preservation kicking in.

But for the first time, Will realised he had found someone he was willing to take the risk for.

Which was why he was feeling like a complete asshole over his behaviour so far. It must have seemed to Hannibal that he was blowing hot and cold… which… actually was the case, as much as he hadn't intended to.

He got to the restaurant early and sat wringing his hands at the table, rehearsing in his head what he might say.

He noticed Hannibal arrive and felt his palms sweat as the alpha was shown to the table. Will stood awkwardly and they both seemed momentarily unsure of how to greet each other before leaning into almost hug before diverting to a handshake.

Will cringed as Hannibal clasped his sweaty palm, feeling his cheeks heat as he took his seat once more.

"Will-"
"Hannib-"

They both started and then stopped, offering the other to go first until Will finally blurted -

"Hannibal, I need to apologise for how I've acted. I feel like maybe I've lead you on… and then I didn't… I uh, ran away when you kissed me." He shook his head and his cheeks burned hot.

"Will, that's…" Hannibal seemed lost for words, or maybe confused. He was certainly frowning. "I should be the one apologising. I took what was clearly harmless banter, and made a presumption I shouldn't have. I had no right to kiss you."

"You didn't presume wrong, I just reacted poorly." Will breathed out the words and looked away.

There was silence for a moment before Hannibal spoke again, relieving Will of the pressure of having to say more.

"I… I'm glad. Not at your reaction, at my presumption being correct. I…" Hannibal trailed off again and Will glanced up, thinking he would see nerves but instead he saw determination. "I like you very much Will, I would like to know you better but… Can you keep an open mind? l mean, really… wide open?"

Will frowned, wondering what this could be about. "l think so, yes."

"l have a most extraordinary condition. You are familiar with the works of Edward Jenner?"

"Of course. Hannibal, you don't have to explain about your condition, I-"

Hannibal gave a gentle shake of his head that silenced Will. "No, it's…Jenner, he experimented on himself. Now, probably you would never experiment on yourself-"

Will let out a spontaneous chuckle at Hannibal's words. "Well actually, l mean, nothing so extraordinary as Jenner, obviously… but l- l used my cryogenic technique to freeze one of my own eggs."

Given that outwardly his research seemed to focus on the mechanics of cryogenics, the biological aspects were not so obvious.

"You did? Why?" Hannibal's quirked brow and open curiosity made Will lean forward a little. Hannibal's keen interest in anything Will had to say about anything scientific was definitely something he enjoyed about the alpha.

The waiter arrived and they ordered drinks, Will making a mental note to actually look at the menu, but for now was completely invested in the conversation at hand.

"Well… I've always been focused on my career and I just thought, just in case," he shrugged. It felt strange to admit to something he found difficult to admit to himself. In truth, after what had happened with his mother, he wasn't sure he would ever want to carry a child. But the thought of not having the option was equally distressing. Will pulled on a smile. "lt's in the dairy section, under 'Junior'."

"What did you say?" Hannibal's jaw tightened and Will frowned at the strange reaction his revelation had caused. Surely he wasn't about to judge Will on such a thing?

"My egg is in the freezer at the lab." Will confirmed, knowing that he sounded a little defensive.

"You called it Junior?" Hannibal asked.

Will felt himself relax, realising that Hannibal simply found the name silly, he let out a relieved chuckle. "Yes. l know. Well, l couldn't put my own name because everybody would know. So, I thought Junior was as good a name as any…"

There was a moment of silence, prolonged by their drinks being set before them and the waiter saying he would give them a little more time with their untouched menus.

Hannibal's face was stone, in fact he looked a little pale.

"Hannibal, what the-" maybe Hannibal was somehow weirded out by Will saving an egg. "This can't have shocked you. You're a scientist, this isn't-"

"I'm sorry. l have to go." Hannibal's abrupt interruption was only mildly less concerning than the alpha then getting to his feet and opening his wallet. He threw down some bills on the table - more than enough to cover the drinks then stalked off without another word.

Will stared, open mouthed, as the alpha stalked off into the night - proving Will completely right in keeping alphas at arm's length.

*

Hannibal burst into the house and immediately found Jack in the kitchen.

“Where did you get it Jack? The egg, where did-”

“Hey, calm down.” Jack was already moving to placate him. It was only then that Hannibal realised Bella was there - standing next to the counter sipping a cup of tea and now watching him intently.

Her shape wasn’t altogether unlike his - though she wore a nicely fitted dress that accentuated how pregnant she was. Her posture was a little off and he knew immediately it was backache - adding a touch of sympathy to his bitterness.

“Bella this is Hannibal.” Jack smiled and shot Hannibal a glare.

“We finally meet Doctor Lecter,” she smiled graciously but there was an edge to it - which Hannibal understood. She likely held him partially responsible for the end of their marriage, considering Jack overworking was a large factor.

She offered her hand anyway, setting down her cup, and he shook it.

“A pleasure.” Hannibal managed a smile and gave a curt nod.

When she pulled her hand away she smiled again, “if you’ll excuse me for a moment.”

Hannibal watched her leave the room before Jack turned to him and indicated the cup of tea.

“Bathroom.”

Hannibal found himself nodding knowingly, his own bladder hadn’t been faring well either. He shook the thought away.

“The egg, Jack.” Hannibal growled. “You said you obtained it from a colleague. That was a lie.”

Jack looked for a moment like he might protest, but then he let out a heavy sigh, “It was from Graham’s cryo-unit. I figured he wouldn’t miss it.”

“Jack!” Hannibal snapped, “didn’t strike you as unethical!”

Jack quirked a brow at him, and he realised of course he had no leg to stand on there - given his current situation.

“Look, it was the best option. Will has plenty. Little Junior was just sat there ready to go.”

“What did you say?” Hannibal felt as though his blood had frozen, a little flutter from the baby.

“It was ready to go. I mean, the-”

“Junior?” Hannibal asked, his heart thudding.

“It was written on the vial.” Jack supplied. “Look, Hannibal, I get your concerns, but Will probably never even noticed. And, this was meant to all be over by now. It was your decision to continue this.” Jack’s words were stern but his tone was gentle.

When Will had said his egg was named Junior, somehow he had known. In that instant and perhaps since the very beginning, he knew that Junior - *his* Junior - was Will’s. Hearing Jack confirm it had his head spinning.

The fight went out of him, “What else could I do Jack?” It was almost a plea.

Jack let out a heavy sigh and nodded.

“I’m sorry for my part in putting in you in this position.” Jack stepped closer to him and tentatively placed a hand on Hannibal’s belly. “I’ll support you thr-”

“Oh god.” Bella’s words interrupted him, neither of them having noticed her return from the bathroom. “Oh my god Jack, are you guys… is that why he’s staying here? Are you together?” Her face contorted in shock and hurt.

“What?” Jack reeled, dropping his hand from Hannibal and turning to face her. “Bella!”

As she stormed out Jack went after her, leaving Hannibal alone with his tumultuous thoughts.

Junior.

*

Will looked up when he heard the lab door open. He was always in an hour earlier than the team, so he was prepared to be surprised to see one of them arriving so early. Instead, he was even more surprised to see Hannibal walking sheepishly towards him.

Will huffed and clenched his jaw, trying to keep his snide words inside, but they spilled out nonetheless - “I’m surprised to see you after last night. Is it your habit to leave your dates like that?”

Will stood without waiting for an answer, stalking from behind his desk over to check the notes at another station.

“Will, please let me explain.” Hannibal’s words were low and gentle, no alpha bravado. “Will,” he urged again. He could feel Hannibal standing so close, the alpha’s determined concern coming off him in waves.

“All right, then go on, explain.” It was almost a dare.

Will rounded on Hannibal and saw the alpha’s jaw tighten. He seemed to be struggling for words, before finally blurting - “I'm pregnant.”

Will didn’t reply for a moment, instead glaring at Hannibal, his anger spilling into his biting words. “Great explanation! Just get out Hannibal. I don’t know what you think is going on

between us, but… there's nothing going on between us! So I don't need your bullshit and stupid games."

Will started back towards his desk, hoping Hannibal would just take the hint. He had no idea what the hell he was playing at, but this was ridiculous. Will had finally decided to let his guard down and was rewarded with this bullshit. Perhaps Hannibal had succumbed to the pressure of his research and loss of funding.

The alternative - that the alpha was bizarrely and cruelly playing with him - didn't bear thinking about.

"Will," Hannibal took hold of his arm, stopping him and looking at him intently. "l really am pregnant." He took Will's hand and placed it on his stomach.

Hannibal's belly was firm. It took Will a moment to make sense of what he was feeling, until he felt a surge under his hand. He reeled back, eyes wide.

"What the-"

It couldn't be true, and yet that felt just like a baby kicking.

"l tested the Expectane on myself. Jack and I fertilized an egg and implanted it into my abdomen. With the drug and hormone supplements, I'm now seven months to term." Hannibal explained, calm. His face was almost an impenetrable mask. Almost.

Will could see something beneath the person suit he was wearing - a fear of Will's potential reaction.

"Oh, my God! That's… you're insane." He shook his head, trying to comprehend it all.

"There's more." Hannibal sounded trepidatious.

"I'm listening." Will growled, now unable to take his eyes from Hannibal's abdomen. Now that he knew, it seemed obvious. Despite the loose layers obscuring his body, Hannibal was so clearly pregnant that Will wasn't sure how he had missed it before.

"Will… Jack was supposed to find an anonymous egg… and he couldn't. So he borrowed one from your dairy section. Lt's… It's Junior."

"Junior? My Junior?" Will asked, confused. He couldn't possible mean…

Will moved to the cryo-unit. He hadn't need to check that all vials remained. There was surely no reason to think that an egg would be unsafe in the secure lab.

"Our Junior now." Hannibal said. Will stopped in his tracks, bile rising as Hannibal continued, "I fertilised the egg with my own sperm and-"

Will balked at the violation. Every part of his body trembling with rage.

“What were you fucking thinking! *Our* Junior?!” Will snarled, feeling very much like he would have done physical damage to Hannibal if he wasn’t carrying a child.

His child.

“There is nothing I can say to apologise enough for this, I… Please, don’t be angry - be rational about this.” Hannibal’s tone had a pleading edge.

“Why should l be angry?” Will retorted, heavy with sarcasm. “You've lied to me, you steal from me… you engage in an utterly immoral, selfish, arrogant stunt without any regard for my feelings whatsoever. What- What am l supposed to be, grateful? This is just... so alpha!”

“I’m sorry Will-” Hannibal started again, this time emotion was breaking through and Will was angry at himself for almost caring that Hannibal was upset. He returned his anger to Hannibal alone, moving away from the alpha.

“Just don't come near me! What did you think you were doing? You think alphas don’t have enough? You have to take this away as well? It's pitiful!” Will spat the words with a snarl.

Before either of them could say anything further, the lab door swung open again and admitted Prurnell and two members of campus security.

Prurnell wore a sneer as she held out her hand to Hannibal. “Let me shake hands with the world’s first pregnant alpha.”

“What are you talking about?” Hannibal’s tone was incredulous, though his body language gave him away as his hands went protectively to his belly.

“The greatest scientific breakthrough in the history of this university. Bravo, Doctor.” She spoke with a pompous glee. “You know, we're in this together, now. We have a contract. And l quote, ‘Exploitation of results from university-funded research shall be at the sole discretion of the university.' Prurnell gestured to the security guards, who stepped forward diligently.

Will found himself instinctively moving between the university staff and his baby.

“Now Hannibal, don’t make a scene. Come on. I've ordered some tests.” She tried to manoeuvre around Will, but he was steadfast.

“Leave him alone.” Will snarled, as he stepped forward, meeting security - to their bewilderment.

“Please, Doctor Graham, don’t get involved.” Prurnell condescended, which made Will snarl all the more. She turned to Hannibal, “do cooperate, after all, you and your baby are university property now.”

“No.” Will growled, either the noise or the waves of scent and emotion made the chimps whoop and holler. The distraction drew the attention of the security guards, enough that they would be easy to pass. “Go Hannibal.”

The alpha moved immediately, practically running out the door before anyone even though to chase him. It took a few moments for security to follow, the lab team arriving at exactly that moment and rebounding the swinging lab doors back onto them.

“What the hell?” Jimmy exclaimed as the sound of at least two takeaway coffee cups hit the floor.

Will looked at Prurnell, wondering what her next move might be, whilst trying not to think about the strangely comforting relief he felt at Hannibal no longer being in her path.

“I’m really disappointed in you, Doctor Graham.”

“The feeling’s mutual.” Will replied.

8 Months Gestation

Chapter Summary

Reunion, reconciliation and a happy ending!

Chapter Notes

Note: I often go back and forth in my fics and will often leave it ambiguous as to whether the omega is intersex or not, and the reader can decide.
I probably should have tagged as intersex sooner (apologies for that), as it doesn't come up explicitly in the earlier chapters - but for this story to really work, the omegas would need to be intersex and be capable of vaginal birth. Re: the sex scene, if anyone squicks front hole sex, just an FYI the v-word isn't used (I think I refer to it as his omegan sex, or similar), and isn't explicitly described.

Hannibal struggled from the bath. Pregnancy not only meant weight gain, but a shift in centre of gravity, aches and pains, and a level of exhaustion he had never experienced before. Getting out of the bath was much more difficult than he'd considered it might be when he had first lowered himself to soak in it.

It was a necessity though. No matter how much he showered, the artificial scent of omega was overwhelming and sometimes he needed to be free of it.

After Prurnell had confronted him at the lab, Will had sought Jack, and his research partner - his friend - came to his rescue.

Dowsing him with the strongest artificial omega scent he could, Doctor Crawford had checked Hannibal in to an Omega Colony - where wealthy expectant omegas could spend the lead up to their labour in a therapeutic environment.

Just another month, at most, and then Jack would perform the necessary c-section, and all it would all be over. Of course, other challenges lay ahead and Hannibal wondered how he would pass the child off as his with no omega around. Perhaps he would need to start over? Or fake some sort of adoption papers? What was certain was that his baby would remain with him. He was pretty sure Jack would also want to retain some sort of contact - a fond uncle.

Hannibal ran his hands over his large, round belly - still slightly slick from the bath oils. He would allow himself to savour the fresh, clean scent of lavender and citrus, until he had no choice but to reapply the omega scent.

The thought of it made him sigh, but it wasn't for much longer.

Hannibal wrapped himself in a towel and went to his bed, laying down and looking up at the ceiling. This was a nice place, and spending time with other pregnant people in prenatal activities was strangely comforting. But there was a further comfort he desired.

Hannibal had messaged Will Graham on his arrival at the colony - thanking the omega for his help evading Prurnell. And, apologising again for the situation. Not that he could regret it. He wanted this baby now. It was his.

His and Will's.

If Will didn't want to be involved, he would accept that. But it was not the ideal option.

He waited patiently for Will's reply, but it never came.

*

Will had had a terrible night's sleep. He seemed to be having more and more of those.

There was this strange feeling of separation within him. Like there was a part of him missing.

He tried to push from his mind the thought that the missing part was Hannibal. Was their baby.

His baby.

The thought filled him with anguish.

He was unsure whether or not he would have used that egg, and perhaps he had time to harvest more before his fertile heats were over if he so wished. But it was still a violation. He had often thought about the egg as merely part of his studies, but there was no denying the truth that he had also wanted it for reassurance. To know that should he ever want the option, he wouldn't be in the same position his mother and countless other omegas had been. He didn't want any omega to ever be in that position again. It was why he had already set plans out with his lawyer - the cryounit he had already developed and would remain his under patent, the university would get the improved mark two. There was no way to not give them that, but keeping his original unit meant that, once some big pharma put his new design into production, he could undercut their sales with his own design. Selling the older, but still superior to the market, cryounit at a little above cost - making it affordable to all clinics that wanted one.

It likely meant his research career would be over. No one would fund further research if there were worried they wouldn't reap the financial rewards, and he wasn't sure he cared. Maybe he'd go back to tinkering with boat engines?

Though now that idea of the future had changed - it was in flux as he remained uncertain as to where Hannibal and the baby fit in his future.

Jack had come to talk to him, explained that he had taken Hannibal somewhere safe, and apologised for his own part in it all. Which by Will's estimate, was a damn large part. If they were to be believed, Hannibal had no idea where Jack had acquired the egg until Will had mentioned it at dinner and Hannibal had realised.

It didn't relieve any of the anger Will had about the situation in general. This was reckless and insane, and exposed everyone involved - including other users of the lab - to all kinds of sanctions. It made them all complicit too - Will had to keep this lie now, or else risk his own career before he was ready to do so.

He clenched his jaw, knowing his concern was for more than his career.

And yet, now he was here - stood at the garden entrance to the Omega Colony. One of the staff let him in and he could see Hannibal sitting quietly with a group of pregnant omegas, meditating.

Will had received Hannibal's message, read it over and over many times, but had not responded in any way, until now. Unsure what exactly to respond until he realised he wouldn't know until he saw the alpha in person. He wouldn't be able to decide anything until he heard his voice.

Will watched and waited, taking a seat on a bench under a tree, as the meditation continued. He was just wondering how long it might be when Hannibal's eyes snapped open and met his own. The masquerading alpha excused himself quietly and made his way over.

Hannibal quietly sat next to him, and Will couldn't help but feel that same strong draw as always. Although he was utterly convinced that their connection grew as their baby did, there was something more beneath it. Almost enough to convince Will of true mates.

"Good to see you." Will spoke first, ignoring the need to reach out and touch the alpha.

"If I saw you every day forever, Will, I would remember this time." Hannibal replied. Will felt the energy spark between them, carried on each word.

"I…" Will felt the words within him, aching to be said - to be acknowledged by both himself and Hannibal. "When Jack told me you were gone… I looked up at the night sky last night. Orion above the horizon and, near it, Jupiter. I wondered if you could see it, too. I wondered if our stars were the same."

He turned to looked at Hannibal, and the alpha ran a hand gently over his large, rounded belly. "I believe some of our stars will always be the same." There was silence then, too much for them both to digest, before Hannibal acknowledged - "

"I'm glad you came. l started to wonder if I'd ever see you again."

Will felt a slight stab at that, though his tone made it clear that was not Hannibal's intention.

"I needed some time to think."

"And?" Hannibal asked, his tone clearly full of concern.

“It’s so unfair what you've done. This is... Monumentally unfair.” Will said firmly, wishing that being close to the alpha and their baby wasn’t making it so difficult to hold onto his anger.

“Will you forgive me?” Hannibal asked softly, both hands resting delicately on his belly now, making Will want to reach out and touch too.

“l wouldn't be asking anything of me at the moment.” Will warned, though he tried to keep his tone light.

“l totally understand if you never want to see me again. l take responsibility for the baby-” Hannibal hung his head.

Will cut him off, frowning, “wait! Can we just get one thing straight here? This is my baby too. Don't you ever forget that!”

“l won't.”

“I’m the omega, you’re the alpha. ls that clear?”

“Indeed.”

“We'll have to find an intelligent way of sharing the responsibilities.” Will said without even thinking. He hadn’t planned it, but now the baby existed, he’d be damned if he wasn’t part of it’s life. He found himself continuing in almost a babble - “we need to create security and a home life, and a regular upbringing!” He sighed, scrubbing a hand over his face. “This is all so fucking complicated.”

“It doesn’t have to be.We could do this together.” It wasn’t a question and Will found himself taking a breath at Hannibal’s words. “We are her fathers now.”

“Her?” Will asked, his smile involuntary. Hannibal nodded, returning the same smile, he cautiously took Will’s hand and placed it on his belly.

Will let out his trembling breath, his body shaking a little - everything in him was pulling toward Hannibal. The father of his child. His alpha.

“Do you have a private room?” Will’s question came out on a shaky breath.

“Yes. Why?” Hannibal replied, a little confused.

Will managed a nervous smile before running a hand over Hannibal’s belly. “Call me old-fashioned, but I’ll be damned if I'm having a child with someone I never slept with.

*

Will groaned as Hannibal slid into him.

He had been wet with slick from the moment Hannibal had started leading him from the gardens and to his room. They had made short work of their clothing and Will was very grateful for Hannibal's high bed.

As well as it being easier for pregnant people to get in and out of at the slightly above standard height, it also put Will at the right level - on his back - to receive the alpha.

His legs were up, almost entirely over Hannibal's shoulders, folded enough to make room for the large bump between them.

Part of him had wanted to explore Hannibal's body - more than a little fascinated by his physical state. A lot of him had wanted to present - to get on all fours and give himself to the alpha.

But between practicality and desperation, Will had ended up quickly on his back - pushed roughly down by the alpha who hungrily kissed him.

"Fuck… Hannibal." Will gasped as Hannibal began to thrust steadily into him, trying to find a position and rhythm that allowed for his unfamiliar bulk.

Hannibal's low growl was full of desperate need. Will wondered if Hannibal had much been plagued by the horniness that often came with pregnancy. The way the alpha was almost feral in his taking - increasingly rough and claiming - made Will whine. Not least at the idea that they could have been doing this for months.

It was a stupid thought really, there was no other way the past might have played out between them. At the most, Will maybe could have come round to the whole thing earlier. He knew though, the reason for this line of thought was nothing to do with what might or might not have been, and all to do with his heat.

When Hannibal leaned into kiss him, teeth grazing his lips, Will bit back - tasting a little blood in his mouth as Hannibal just growled all the more.

"It feels like you've been my alpha for a long time now. For as long as… you've been my alpha since you became pregnant… and…" Will growled, reaching his hands up and digging fingers into Hannibal's arms, "I had to spend my heat alone."

A low noise rumbled in Hannibal's chest and he was kissing Will again, viciously, before moving his sharp teeth to Will's throat and near-threatening to create a bonding bite.

Using his grip on Hannibal's arms, Will drove himself back onto Hannibal's cock, trying to take him as deep as he could. Wanting - needing - his knot almost as though he were still in heat.

"Two. Weeks…" each word was punctuated by a snap of Will's hips to meet Hannibal's. "Two weeks ago I had my heat. And you were here."

"You should have come to me."

Hannibal's voice was deep and conveyed a level of alpha command Will had never heard before. He shuddered, "I should have come to you." He agreed with a whine.

He wasn't sure he could have, he wasn't ready then - but as Hannibal drove deeper into him he knew he should have come.

Will cried out as Hannibal adjusted his legs almost painfully, his muscles and ligaments straining as he opened Will up to his deeper thrusts.

The pain was nothing, because the pleasure was blinding. He could feel Hannibal's knot swelling against him but no matter how deep the alpha tried to go, the swell of his stomach stopped him.

"Hannibal…" It came out as a whine. He had wanted to tell him it was ok, that he didn't need to be knotted, but it would have been a lie. As much as he wanted to settle for what Hannibal could give, his need was now core deep in his omegan instincts.

A few more abortive attempts, and Hannibal stopped his thrusts with a growl. He pulled out and with a strength that shocked Will, the alpha flipped Will onto his front.

Will cried out, pleasure coursing through him at the thought of being mounted by the alpha - *his alpha*. It took a moment to register that what he felt next was Hannibal's hand - fingers thrusting into his omegan entrance. It took a moment longer for his brain to understand why - that Hannibal was completely unable to knot him at his current size.

Instead there were fingers, and then one more. And then, as Will thought that the constant stimulation of his o-spot might send him completely over the edge, Hannibal curled his fingers to make an almost fist. Not big enough to hurt Will, but certainly big enough to mimic a knot.

Will screamed as he came, his come spattering the bedsheets beneath him.

His whole body shook and it took him a moment to realise that Hannibal was crying out too, now almost beside him on the bed. He could look back down the bed enough to see that the alpha had his other hand around his cock - pumping and squeezing his knot - and spilling copiously onto the sheets. Will groaned when he felt some of it spatter against his thigh.

They seemed to stay like that for minutes or maybe hours as Hannibal worked himself through several climaxes, whilst Will felt as sated as could possibly be achieved - blissed out with the pseudo-knot filling him.

After another shuddering grunt, Hannibal withdrew his hand slowly from Will, leaving the omega empty and whining, and allowed himself to fall gently to the bed. He lay on his side, panting and facing Will. Will mirrored him, lowering himself so that he too was on his side facing Hannibal.

"I'm… sorry I wasn't there for your heat." Hannibal's tone was full of contrite concern, and it surprised Will that he clearly felt so sorry about it.

Will chuckled, the very action making every part of him ache with overuse. “Don’t be silly, that was just my instincts being pissed at you.”

A slight, exhausted, smile grew on Hannibal’s lips, “I think I should likely get used to such things. I fully believe that I will do many things that will have you *pissed* at me in the future.”

Will laughed and tried to lean in - what ended up being a strange forward shuffle as his exhausted and aching body refused a more graceful action.

Their closeness was dictated by the child within Hannibal - allowing them to kiss slowly and sweetly, though their bodies were largely separated. Hannibal breathed a shuddering breath into Will’s mouth as the omega smoothed his hand over his belly.

“You’re beautiful…” Will whispered against Hannibal’s lips before deepening the kiss.

Will felt the soft skin of Hannibal’s belly, and the ever so slight lumps and bumps that hinted at the position of the baby within.

“I… I’m terrified of being pregnant. My mother, she… during childbirth she died and… It could be so easily prevented now. But the treatments weren’t available, or the ones that were weren’t affordable.”

“Will…” his name came out on a gentle breath as he pulled the omega as close to him as was possible. “I… can never apologise enough for putting you through this.”

Will shrugged. “You thought the egg was from a willing donor. Besides… I don’t know… it seems kinda fitting. I never thought much about actually having kids, I could never quite get passed the pregnancy. This…” he ran his hand over Hannibal’s belly again, “it sort of feels right.”

Mine. Will’s mind supplied as Hannibal purred with each movement of his hand - he knew his instincts had assigned that word not only to his baby, but the alpha carrying her.

*

Hannibal relaxed on his bed. He’d spent the day in various activities with the other pregnant residents - some meditation, a light lunch, and now he was happy to settle for an afternoon nap.

All the rooms at the expensive Omega Colony, were private and comfortable, though he was sure Jack had forked out for one of the more luxurious suites. In fact the bed was soft and firm in all the right places that had allowed him the best sleep since the insemination. Despite the underlying concern he had over the birth and Prurnell and many other mitigating factors, Hannibal felt relaxed for the first time in a great while.

A combination of taking a break from work for the first time in years and being in a relaxing environment were doing wonders for him. For the baby too, no doubt. And, he had to allow, Will’s visit a few days earlier had also had a euphoric effect.

Not just the sex, which had blissed him out of his mind and allowed him to settle into a new level of relaxation he hadn't realised he'd needed. But also the connection with his omega. Because he was in no doubt, Will was *his* omega.

Maybe these things might have come about anyway without the baby, certainly the draw they felt to each other was more than just their shared connection through the pregnancy.

Thoughts of Will made his pulse race and his skin heat - memories of their day together. He let his hand move to his crotch - a climax would ensure a pleasant nap.

He remembered Will's mouth moving over him, the way the omega touched him - gently and reverently. How the omega felt against him - rough and smooth in all the right places. Hannibal's hand wrapped around his now straining length as he remembered what it was like to have Will's tight heat around him.

He imagined what it would be like for them to be together again. After the pregnancy, perhaps during Will's heat. The thought of them being locked together for days on end when he had yet to experience their knotting was enough to send him over the edge. He took hold of his knot, squeezing it with a grunt as he fisted himself through his climax. A slight pain - a phantom contraction - as his body spasmed through the orgasm.

As his breathing calmed and he allowed himself to rest back, with no consideration for the mess, he went completely pliant. A nap would come very easily now, Hannibal thought.

But then there was another slight contraction.

Hannibal knew that orgasms could cause contraction like pains, and thought little of it initially. But then there was another, much stronger to the point that it took his breath away. And then another.

"Oh…" realisation hit Hannibal.

He reached a shaky hand for the phone on his bedside table.

"Jack… It's time."

*

By the time Jack arrived, Hannibal was practically screaming. It wasn't just the pain, which was more than he was sure any alpha had ever felt in their lives, but also the lack of correct biology. The contractions were trying to, naturally, move the baby into the correct birthing position, but the baby had nowhere to go. There was no birthing canal for the contractions to push the baby into. It felt like his insides were going to tear apart.

"Doctor Crawford!" One of the harried nurses greeted Jack as she tried to keep hold of Hannibal. He'd got sick of waiting and was making his way down the stairs from the resident rooms. "We have a labouring suite for these eventualities, but your husband refuses to go."

"Jack." Hannibal snapped, ignoring the nurse's words.

Jack rushed forward and took over from the nurse, Hannibal's weight shifting to him. "It's ok, thanks, we planned for the birth to take place at my practice."

"But… Doctor Crawford-"

"This way honey." Jack overtalked the nurse as he addressed Hannibal, stepping passed the flummoxed staff offering their help, and out through the front door.

"Just hang on Hannibal, I've called ahead. My staff are getting everything ready for us."

"But-" Hannibal started to protest, but Jack preempted him as he helped him into his car that he'd left running outside.

"They don't know anything, just that we have an emergency private case. There will only be two staff there, and I trust them completely." Jack spoke softly, reassuringly. Hannibal realised this was likely how he talked to his pregnant patients. It was an interesting side to see of him.

He didn't hold the thought long before pain gripped him again. "Call Will, please… Get Will to meet us there." He panted the words in between bouts of pain.

"Will?" Jack asked, giving a sideways glance at Hannibal as he pulled out onto the highway.

"Will Graham." Hannibal clarified, shouting the name before gritting his teeth. "Hurry Jack. The contractions are getting closer together."

Jack started punching numbers into the carphone. Hannibal couldn't focus on the low ringing noise, only half focusing when the call connected and a voice came on that he didn't recognise.

"Jack?"

"Sutcliffe, how is the set up going?"

"Fine Jack, we're already for you and the patient. Just…"

"What is it?"

"There are press here. I don't know what's going on, or why. Is your patient a celebrity? If so, someone leaked the information. There are news vans parked right out front."

"What the damn hell!" Jack growled. "How did they know? Who knows there, I told you not to-"

"Shit." The man on the end of the line exclaimed. "When I told Georgia to help prep the room, Freddie was still in the office, she must have overheard."

"Lounds? The receptionist?"

"Yeah, she's… trouble."

“Okay, well too late to worry about that now. Just have everything ready. And you and Georgie need to be set to scrub in. I’ll work out how to get us passed the press.”

“Alright Jack, we’ll be ready for you.”

Hannibal wasn’t sure if there was more said, he only really focused back in again when the line was dead and Jack was dialling again. Hannibal heard a whine that sounded suspiciously like Will’s name. Jack’s side on look of confusion and curiosity made Hannibal realise the noise had come from him.

The phone was ringing again as another wave of pain hit.

“Will?”

“Jack?”

“Hannibal is… we need your help.”

*

The subterfuge was remarkably easy and Will thanked good fortune that Jack’s ex-wife was heavily pregnant.

The bait and switch had been simple - as simple as it could be with an alpha in labour, and in real danger of rupturing something internally that could potentially prove fatal for him and, or the baby.

Jack had swung by his house where Will had been waiting with the car running. It had taken only a minute for Jack to help Hannibal into his car, with instructions on where to go, and then speed off again.

Part of Will wanted to be excited - their baby was coming - but it was crushed by fear of what might happen and a deep concern at the amount of pain Hannibal was in. It was all too visceral a reminder of what happened to his mother. The alpha could barely talk but to growl or cry out when he felt another contraction. It was clear from his distended abdomen that the baby had dropped, trying to force its way out of somewhere with no exit.

Will drove quickly and carefully, every bump in the road seemed to be agony to the alpha. He wanted to comfort him. More than that, he was fighting every instinct in him to pull the car over so he could scent the alpha. He pushed through it, wondering if alphas felt the same with their pregnant omegas. Maybe this was a result of their relationship being so new? It didn’t matter, what mattered was that Will just concentrated on getting Hannibal back to Jack.

When they pulled around the side of the clinic building, via a backstreet, Will could see immediately the situation. Jack’s car was trying to push through a gathered crowd of journalists, and Kade Prurnell stood right at the front of them with members of the board. If Will hadn’t been so concerned with getting Hannibal out of the car, he might have stopped to watch in amusement. As it was he saw Jack get out of the car, shouting indignantly, though

he was too far off to know what was said. Prurnell wore a smug look, right up until the moment Jack helped Bella out of the car. She looked around with confusion, Jack with anger, Prurnell with shock and the board with annoyance.

“Over here!” A young woman’s voice sounded and Will turned, Hannibal leaning against him heavily, to see a nurse holding open a side door.

They ambled as quickly as possible, Hannibal making little sounds of pain with each step.

“Gurney?” Will asked.

The nurse nodded, “just through the next set of doors, then we’re up in the lift two floors. Jack will meet us there.”

Will nodded, feeling reassured, In fact, feeling a whole weight lifted that he hadn’t realised he was carrying, knowing that there were people trained to do this now on hand. Or, as well trained as they could be given the circumstances.

As they helped Hannibal onto the gurney and started off again, he saw the nurse’s nose twitch, taking in the scent. The false omega scent was no match for the unmistakable alpha musk now coming off of Hannibal in waves. From all the sweat and various other body odours that labour was bringing on, Hannibal was clearly alpha.

It took her only a moment to school her expression - it now being clear to her exactly what the emergency was with this patient.

Minutes later and they were in the elevator and arriving at the designated floor. It was clean and bright - the hospital part of the practice. As they moved down the hallway towards the labouring suites, another elevator opened, coming up from the reception area of the building. With Bella on his arm, Jack came out. He let Bella’s arm fall away and came quickly to the gurney as she looked on with mouth agape.

“Sutcliffe is scrubbed in and waiting, everything is ready to go. What’s the plan Jack?” The nurse asked.

“C-Section.” He said, checking Hannibal’s forehead for a fever, before taking his wrist and counting the beats.

“This isn’t going to be straight forward,” she murmured.

“It really isn’t.” Jack growled, though more at the situation than at the nurse’s assessment. He signalled for her to move the gurney forward again, but then stopped Will as he went to follow. “Wait, Will, this… This is dangerous. Both for Hannibal and the baby. We don’t know what’s going to happen. And I can’t have you in there. Please, sit with Bella.” He indicated over to his ex-wife where she now had moved to a small seating area near the empty reception desk towards the surgical rooms. “We’ll get you as soon as we can.”

“Prurnell?” Hannibal struggled to ask.

“Don’t fret, it’s fine.” Jack reassured, putting a hand on Hannibal’s arm. “The board fired her on the spot - talk of irreparable reputational damage. She’s not coming after you or the baby. They just hoping Bella and I won’t sue.”

Hannibal nodded, managing a slight smile of relief before he was wracked with pain again.

“Will.” Hannibal struggled to say his name as he faded in and out of near unconsciousness with each new contraction. But the word was a cry, that had Will at his side.

“I’m here.” He lifted Hannibal’s wrist, running his nose over the heated, clammy flesh before rubbing it against the scent glands on his neck. It wasn’t a lot, but it assuaged some of that inner need he had to scent his mate.

“We have to go!” Jack spoke more so to the nurse and she nodded, moving the gurney on until Will was unable to keep hold of Hannibal any more.

His heart raced and he was frozen in fear, as his mind reeled through possibilities he didn’t want to let himself consider, though they overwhelmed his mind anyway.

He could lose them both.

*

“Hannibal, stay with me.” He could hear Jack’s barked words and they felt like a slap to his face. His eyes sprang open though it took him a moment to focus on anything. “Stay awake, buddy. We’re doing this under local anaesthesia. I want you conscious.”

It might have seemed a cruel thing, the pain was already enough to make him want to pass out, and even though his mind was barely able to understand half of what was happening, in the back of his mind he knew it was too late for a spinal block. They had passed that point and now a local was the only option. Jack didn’t want him under a general anesthetic - didn’t want him unconscious, with all the added risk that came with that.

“Will…” Hannibal whined the name, only realising he had when he recognised the semblance of his own voice.

“We got you.” The nurse, Georgia, told him as she squeezed his hand.

“Damn, Hannibal. What’s been going on with you two? I didn’t-” Jack was speaking as he worked, preparing the area for incision, but stopped suddenly when Hannibal started to drift again. “Hannibal!” He clicked his fingers.

Hannibal hadn’t realised his eyes had started to close until he opened them again.

“Tell me about Will.” Georgia prompted, as she too went about preparations, though lingering near his side. He could see Sutcliffe preparing the anaesthesia and then Jack giving him a nod.

“Will?”

“Yes, tell me about him.” Georgia smiled. She was trying to occupy him, he knew - to keep him awake and distracted.

“He’s the father.” Hannibal’s tone was slightly annoyed. Surely she knew that? This was all deeply vexing.

He didn’t have chance to think further on it when another contraction hit him. He cried out, clutching the sides of the bed and feeling every muscle strain. But more than that, he felt that need to push. Whatever part of his alpha anatomy was trying to mimic that of an omega, it was doing a perfect job. As with an omega, he felt that compulsion to push - his body making the effort for him with no need for his conscious ascent.

Without further thought, Hannibal bore down into the contraction, allowing his body to push as it wanted to.

“No!” Jack cried out. Somewhere in the back of his mind, Hannibal understood. Normally there would be a spinal block, it would remove the compulsion. He felt wetness down his legs, passed the area that had been numbed.

Blood. Of course. He could picture it easily - his push as Jack cut him open, forcing the blood out of him.

“Hannibal, I need you to fight that urge okay?” Jack growled gently. “I know you want to push, I know your body wants you to do it, but you have to hold on. Just fight against it. You can do it. I’ve never known anyone as pig-headed stubborn as you, you can do it!”

Hannibal was nodding and felt himself feeling woozy again, he fought to keep his eyes open as Jack and his team worked frantically.

Another contraction hit, he screamed through the urge to push, fighting his own body as hard as he could.

“We’re almost there Hannibal, hold on!”

*

The muffled cries from Hannibal and frantic words between Jack and the team had been hard to ignore, leaving Will pacing just beyond the doors.

“I know this is tough, but Jack will take care of him. He’s the best, do you think I chose him as my OB/GYN because he’s my ex?” She said softly, some humour in her voice.

They had never met before but Will found Bella personable and engaging. Had the circumstances been different he was sure they would have had lively conversations. As it was he was fighting the urge to scream at her to leave him alone.

Every instinct in his body was pushing him to ensure his child was okay, whilst also in a heightened state of alert with his alpha in peril. The whole thing was messing with his mind and making it hard not to rip the doors off their hinges and go in there. It didn’t matter that there was nothing he could do, he had to do *something*.

And then Hannibal screamed.

*

“Another minute Hannibal, just hold on. Georgia?”

Georgia nodded and moved off, wheeling over another trolley of what looked in that moment to be torture devices.

Hannibal fought the urge to pointlessly cross his legs, feeling the physical need to push growing within him again.

“Jack!” He cried out in warning before letting loose another scream.

There was no pain, but he could feel his skin tugging, could feel hands moving inside him.

And then there was that noise. That damn banging that he wasn’t sure was in his head or not.

“Hannibal!” Will’s voice called to him and he let out another whine. It was the last thing he registered before he started to lose consciousness, that and the change in beeping of his monitor. He knew, somewhere in his consciousness he knew he was coming to an end. He wanted to tell Jack to save his baby but he was gone before the words would form.

*

“You have to stop! Let them focus!” Bella’s tone was angry as she pulled him away from the door with more strength than he would have credited the pregnant omega. “Please Will, just calm-”

Bella’s face dropped and she looked stricken for a moment. The same amount of time it took Will to realise the wetness that hit him, splashed up the bottom of his legs.

They looked down at the same moment and saw that her waters had broken.

“Oh shit.” Bella frowned as she cursed.

Will moved quickly to Bella’s side, easing her down onto the floor.

“This is… bad timing.” Will started, the words coming out before he could even consider them.

She cocked a brow, “you think?!”

“I’ll get… someone.”

“Will, Jack is busy,” she gave him a pointed look and he almost crumbled. “Everyone is busy, you need to help me.”

Will clenched his jaw and looked back at the door separating him from Hannibal, who had gone unnervingly quiet.

“Okay,” he said, nodding. Trying to reassure himself as much as Bella. “I’ll find you a room.”

Will went to stand, thinking that one of the doors along from Hannibal’s room must also be labouring suites or other possible options. But Bella grabbed him, squeezing his arm hard and crying out as her first contraction rippled through her.

Will winced as her nails dug into his skin.

*

“Breathe Bella,” Will tried to keep his voice gentle despite the immense stress he was feeling. Bella gripped his hand tighter, propped up as she was against a few cushions he had pulled off of the chairs in the waiting area when she refused to be moved. She didn’t strike him as an irrational woman, but one thing was clear - she might no longer be married to Jack, but he was still her alpha and she did not want to be far from him.

She looked for a moment like she was going to bite his head off, but instead she let out a short cry - “Jack.”

Will felt her need deep within him, feeling it too for Hannibal, for their baby.

His own breath shuddered from him.

“I’m here baby.” Jack’s voice cut through the sound of her puffing breaths. “Why didn’t you get someone, press the on-call buzzer or-”

“I wanted you.” Bella reached her hands out to him and he started to ease her up, neither of them giving any thought to Will.

“You got me Bella, you got me.” Jack reassured as he started her down the hallway toward the next room.

Will stood and watched them, bewildered as they started into a side room and Jack was calling out for his staff. Will’s mind was reeling, every nerve buzzing. His instincts were in turmoil as he tried to make sense of the situation he found himself in.

And then he heard a baby cry.

*

Hannibal wasn’t sure how much time had passed when he woke. He was no longer in the labouring suite but in a pleasantly appointed room with the afternoon sun casting shadows through the curtains.

It took him a moment to remember what had happened.

“My baby!” He tried to sit, but his lower body was wracked with a pain that radiated through him. He felt like he had been gutted and sewn back together, which might not be far from the truth.

“Shh,” a quiet voice hushed and he looked to find Will at his side. The omega placed a gentle hand on him and eased him back, an expression on his face that Hannibal could only describe as loving. It warmed him through and he smiled easily despite the linger pain.

“Will. The baby…”

“She’s fine Hannibal,” Will smiled and stepped aside a little so that Hannibal could see past him and at the hospital issue cot next to the bed. “She’s perfect. Jack checked her over, everything is as it should be. She’s as healthy as their little Miriam.”

Hannibal felt his heart swell, his chest ached as he reached for Will’s hand. Will grinned, Hannibal drew his hand to his lips and pressed a kiss to the back of it.

“I’m sorry, Will. I didn’t know that it was your egg, but if I had…”

“Shh, we talked about this already. It’s okay and… If you had known, then I hope you would have done exactly the same thing, because I can’t imagine my life without you. Without both of you.” Will leaned in and placed a soft kiss on his brow. Will let out a heavy sigh. “I won’t pretend that I’m not pissed at Jack, but how can I regret this?”

They both looked over at the sleeping baby.

“It might be… unconventional, and certainly not something I’d ever planned for, but… We’re her father’s now.” Will moved to the cot and stroked a gentle finger through her head of curls. Will looked over with a wondrous smile. “And as soon as you’re physically fit… you’ll be on diaper duty.

Hannibal smiled.

*

Four Years Later:

~ The Scientist Quarterly - summer edition ~

Dr. Will Graham, inventor of the much lauded CryoDesign units that in recent years have revolutionised the affordable egg storage for omega’s in need, has recently given birth to a healthy baby boy.

Dr Graham and his husband Dr Hannibal Lecter, already have one daughter - Junior - but have been plagued with fertility issues common to older omegas.

In a fascinating story that might even lend credence to the scientific theory of True Mates, Dr Graham was able to carry their baby to term - from one of his own frozen eggs - thanks his involvement in the successful human trials of new fertility wonder drug - Expectane. A drug invented and developed by his husband.

Between the two of them, this power couple of the scientific community, are set to change the world of affordable fertility treatments as we know it.

A tale of fate perhaps? Certainly one of scientific and philanthropic excellence. Interview on Page 11.

End Notes

I should point out, this is an Unplanned Pregnancy for Will XD

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